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PRICE ONE SHILLING.

IRELAND,

But still without the

MINISTRY OF THE WORD IN HER OWN
NATIVE LANGUAGE.

Our fellow-subjects, the Native Irish, a most interesting race, now amount to more than *three millions*—no small proportion of the British rule. They have been cruelly neglected for ages; but are they always to be forgotten, and neglected still?

35.

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MINISTRY OF THE WORD

IN HER OWN

NATIVE LANGUAGE.

C. Anderson

“All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.—Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to *every creature*. And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”

“Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.”

THE KING OF ZION.

EDINBURGH:

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TO THE READER.

THE mere title of a book has sometimes had as much effect as the book itself, and to such a result I do not object on the present occasion. For what, says many a reader at the first glance, can it possibly mean? Is it the mere affirmation of blind zeal? or the bold and ungenerous assertion of one who knows nothing of Ireland? Amidst all the zeal, not merely professed but displayed, for propagating Christianity in our own day, is it intended as a libel on all the parties concerned? Has "the story of peace," as the Native Irish beautifully style the message of salvation, been carried to Africa and India,—to New Zealand and the South Seas,—to Burmah, and Java, and China, but not to them? A country known for many ages before the discovery of America, and lying all that time in the very bosom of Great Britain, cannot possibly be in such a condition, and what therefore can this title mean or intend? Ah, what indeed! For, whatever may be said, or by any man, it expresses in few words *by far*

the most melancholy fact in the history of this nation, and one, too, which enters more deeply than any other into the peace and prosperity of our country. The title involves a momentous truth, which cannot much longer be disregarded with impunity.

Will the reader, then, now listen for a few moments ? Perhaps he knows that it is now above six hundred and sixty years since Ireland was nominally united to Britain, and perhaps he feels that it is but nominally united still. The State is politically one, indeed ; but union of heart and community of feeling are still in abeyance. And is there not a cause ? Can no reasons be assigned for such a state of things ? Some would reply, many ; but among others, does the reader know that, in less than two years hence, it will be just three hundred years since the language of the Native Irish was proscribed by Act of Parliament ? and that, steady to its spirit, there has never been a single Irish school taught under the sanction of the reigning power, nor does it encourage or support even one, up to the present moment ?

For the same long and dreary period of three hundred years, our own language was proscribed by William the Conqueror ; but we speak, and read, and preach English still, and where is now his Norman-French ? Of all people upon earth, surely we were the last who should have dreamed of trying the same experiment on our fellow-subjects ; and yet, about one hundred and seventy-five years after we had escaped from the debasing thralldom of this Norman-French, in 1537,

Henry VIII. proceeded on the same blind and illiberal policy which was first imported by this rude conqueror. The governing power, as if in duty bound, have followed his counsel ever since! Nor is this all. The abuses which accumulated round this abortive experiment have proved a tremendous drain upon this country. The amount expended, *professedly* under this head alone, may seem incredible;* but the consequence is, that the Native Irish speak Irish still, and to an extent ten times greater than in the days of Henry VIII. The language has increased, of course, with the natural increase of the people.

Let English education proceed by all means, and with all rapidity, but still let it be distinctly understood that all the noise that was lately made, and the discussions held, respecting Irish Education, was, to speak correctly, about a misnomer. It was English Education in Ireland that was meant, not Irish Education, properly so called. Respecting the latter, amidst all our boasted patriotism, no generous flame was ever enkindled so as to engross men of all minds on both sides of the Channel; though we might just as successfully argue for English Education in France, as being the best and only medium for mental improvement, as in certain parts of Ireland. Nay, and I am persuaded, with *more* success; for, let us not suppose that the policy pursued for three hundred years, though so

* One proof is more than sufficient. Only 7905 Irish children, educated in English and apprenticed, have cost how much? *One Million Sterling!* See the first Report of the Parliamentary Commissioners, p. 50.

powerless, has been productive of no effect. No ; it has in part succeeded, though it has been through circumstances altogether independent of the measures taken ; but the policy itself has left one division of the national heart far worse than that of the tongue. The British Crown, and the British Constitution, and the English tongue, may have many charms ; but, in the whole combined, there is not one which can amuse away, or beguile a people from the language which their mothers gave them. They have not been able to do so on this side of the Irish Channel ; why should they be expected to do so on that ?

Does the reader still inquire for farther information and abundant proof, or wish to know how his favourite English can ever extend through many an Irish district ? I must be permitted to refer him to a previous publication.* Even here, however, I may add another leading fact. It is now above 240 years since a college was founded in Ireland, and afterwards plentifully endowed, *principally with a view to the natives*,—the aborigines of the country ; yet, from the day of its foundation, in 1591, there has never been a regular chair for an Irish professor of the language within the walls, nor is there one at the present moment !

But still these considerations, painful though they be, are far inferior to the fact embodied in our title. To the parties whom they may concern I therefore leave them ; and turning round to no party, as such,

* Historical Sketches of the Native Irish and their Descendants ; illustrative of their Past and Present State, with regard to Literature, Education, and Oral Instruction. Second Edition.



England, there is not at this moment *one* single building in Dublin or Cork, in Limerick or Galway, in Newry or Waterford, in Sligo or Drogheda, in Kinsale or Kilkenny, in Carlow or Clonmel, in Cashel or Kildare, nay *in all Ireland*, expressly dedicated to the infinitely-important purpose of proclaiming the Word of God, the commission of the Redeemer, in the Irish tongue! Had the Saviour's voice been heard, had his authority been regarded as paramount, ere this time there had been a thousand; but as yet there is not *one*!

In the Saviour's commission, his clemency and pity for *every creature* shine conspicuous. The wisdom of God and the power of God are here combined. This, with his promised presence, is the rod of his strength, which he hath sent out of Zion, all-powerful to soften and subdue,—the message of pardon to the condemned, of life to the dead, of immortality to the dying; but we have neglected it, nay rejected it, and what wisdom is in us! In such circumstances, this everlasting talk about English and the English tongue, is, to say the least, the very height of presumption; as if it were not enough to look back on the dreary past, and as if all that is imperative in Divine authority, and all that is involved in the eternity before us, were to be sacrificed to the miserable gratification of a distant posterity talking as we do!

Had the high commission of a secular prince been so treated, would he not have resented the indignity and fought against us? And have we escaped for the

past? Look to Ireland and her hundred inhabited islands in the adjoining seas. And shall we escape for the future, if we go on and neglect to spread so great salvation? For here I argue at once for the *manner* which our common Saviour has prescribed, and the *matter* which he desires us to convey; before which every human device ought to shrink into insignificance. When He rose triumphant from the grave, clothed with unlimited power over men as well as angels, had He left, in the first instance, a *variety* of instructions to be literally obeyed, we might have accounted for some one among them having been overlooked, owing to the heedlessness of man. But, in confining his first instructions to one,—to one imperative commission, clear, definite, and precise in all its terms,—introduced with so much solemnity, and closing with such encouragement,—with such proof of his own deep and unchanging personal interest to the very close of time; let me now ask every Christian reader, whether he does not think, that upon the simple and single-hearted compliance or non-compliance with this one commission, the peace and prosperity of a country may not turn as upon a hinge? And if in our own highly-favoured nation, where this commission has been revered and obeyed in most parts, and in all its other tongues, there should still remain a division of the people not amalgamated with the rest, with regard to whom this Divine command has been long, nay systematically and universally neglected, why should any Christian man be perplexed as to the cause? Why perplexed as to the remedy?

Why diverted from it? If the Redeemer's commission be a divine communication, to oppose its progress is to fight against God; but if we acknowledge its authority, to neglect its extension is, if possible, still worse, combining the highest contempt for Divine authority, with hardness of heart towards our own species.

Some solitary Christian, indeed, may have a will of his own even in such a case, like Paul, so anxious to preach to the Jews in Jerusalem, when his commission was to the Gentiles: or another, like Jonah, may try to escape from Jehovah, till he be compelled to speak as he is bid: but that a whole Nation should prove indifferent, nay, I must say, refractory, and persevere from one century to another in universal neglect of its own fellow-subjects, is almost as wonderful as it is melancholy! Such, however, has been the treatment of that ancient race and interesting class of men, the Native Irish, by all bodies in Britain, and all in Ireland, so far as the express commission of the great God, even our Saviour, is concerned.

Had the people we have neglected been phlegmatic in the extreme; had the language they speak, and so much love, been as great a jargon as that of the Chickasaws and Chactaws of North America, our obligations had been the same. But when in the Irish we see a people endowed with great mental vivacity, and a superior aptitude for every species of mental culture, speaking a language so regular, and therefore easy of acquisition, sententious, and so expressive, what shall we, what can we say? Had there been another nation under

heaven as highly favoured as our own, who had pursued such a course, some might have pled this, in apology, to preserve us from shame ; but there is none to keep us in countenance. We stand single and alone, without one single building to bear witness in our favour.

A building, however, I have fixed upon, merely as a positive and tangible proof of the existing state of things, and because it is regular, stated, and stationary proclamation of the truth, in Irish, for which I contend. If the building exists not, of course the men, the messengers of peace, are wanting ; but far be it from me at present even to moot the preposterous idea of commencing with building, or to raise a cry respecting the mere accommodation of hearers. With this commission in our ear, the immediate and far more important, the *only* question is, Where are the men ? Yes, this is the question with which, alas ! we have been met for years ; and by some, who are anxious to escape from a painful sense of obligation, it has been thought decisive, that *nothing* can be done ! But in our circumstances, after such long neglect, I ask, is it reasonable, or is it even modest to expect, that such men are to appear at our bidding, or that they are to start up as soon as we put the question ? Assuredly, they are not to drop down from the clouds ; but, unfortunately, in this country, of late years, no sooner has an important object been proposed, than we have turned round to what has been called ‘ the Machine of Society,’ and have been lost in the midst of instrumentality, mechanism,

arrangements, and combination. Just as if mechanism, or management, or combination, if not our masters, were, at least, our first or only warrant for exertion. But these are things of small account in the eye of the King of Zion. They never were employed by Him in the commencement of his reign, nor ever will be. Let us inquire for the commission itself, and read it.

“ O how unlike the complex works of man,
Heaven's easy, artless, unencumber'd plan !
No meretricious graces to beguile,
No clustering ornaments to clog the pile ;
From ostentation as from weakness free,
It stands like the cerulean arch we see,
Majestic in its own simplicity.”

The original triumph of Christianity has surely not died away into a faint tradition of no value? Let us read, then, the commission once more,—yes, and ponder over it. In all cases where Divine sovereignty is concerned, our first duty is to be still and know that he is God. In the present instance, He who speaks has had positive dominion over us since the day of our birth ; but, as converts to Christianity, he has dominion over us by *consent*. Now, the rights of his dominion he has embodied and preserves in the authority of this *command* ; the condescensions of his goodness, and mercy, and love, he conveys in the allurements of this *promise*,—“ He that believeth shall be saved.” We have here no will to consult but one, and no voice can be so distinct as that which should have sounded in the ear of many generations back. And though quali-

fied men be not yet seen, are there no preparatives on our part for their appearance? Men gifted from above, or say, in the first instance, that we should long for one; since, in the greatest emergencies, God himself has then only asked for one.—Isaiah, vi. 8; Jeremiah, v. 1. A man with the word of truth in his mouth, and the spirit of kindness in his heart, walking in peace and in equity,—who would exult to carry, in this expressive Irish tongue, a message of pardon to the condemned from the Prince of Life, of salvation from endless wo, purchased at the expense of his blood. This is the man, for such are the men required. And are there no preparatives on our part for their appearance? Unquestionably there are. One of the best would be, heartfelt uneasiness as to our present position, and earnest invocation. And there is but another, profound reverence and esteem for the means of Divine appointment. These, indeed, are so intimately connected, that the latter is essential to the former; for if suitable regard had only been paid to the Saviour's express command, earnest invocation would have been employed long ago. One consolation, however, at least, remains: it is not even yet too late to begin, for surely we cannot, without great guilt, propose to leave this to the next generation. Let us cultivate in ourselves, and cherish in others, profound and exclusive reverence for the sovereign appointment of our Redeemer. Every species of instrumentality, of ingenuity, of activity, must be placed in its own inferior, subordinate, *low* place. The commission, at once the warrant for exes-

tion and the security for success, must rise up in its own majesty, far above all human device. That *power* of the press, and that *power* of education, which in this kingdom some have almost worshipped, must give way to the application of a power far above them both united. And well they may, for in good time they will both find their own subordinate place. Every thing, in short, which man can devise, propose, or adopt, must here bow down the head and worship. If some require a sign,—if others seek after wisdom, or sigh over the difficulty of the case,—let us simply do as we are bid. For “where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”

I have thought that it would certainly be an easy thing, and unostentatious, for many Christians in their secret devotions (and, blessed be God, many such there are in Ireland as well as Britain), to remember these millions of our fellow-subjects, and by name before God, but by no other than that of the Native Irish. There are in Ireland, too, many devoted men who, from week to week, proclaim the glad tidings of salvation in the English tongue; and, in leading the devotions of others, why might not one *standing* supplication from their lips be heard for this people? But by no other name than that of the Native Irish, or one of equal respect, our fellow-subjects: for every genuine

friend of Ireland must know the reason of my being thus particular as to the mode. For the souls of a people, confessedly ancient, who by us and our forefathers have been so long neglected, respect is due. Much of sympathy and compassion do we owe them. All bitterness, and wrath, and clamour, and envy, and evil-speaking, ought to be hushed, and heard no more; but let us, at least, with all the disinterested and undeviating perseverance of Christianity, be kind and tender-hearted towards the aborigines of our country.

Surely in some such state as this, it would not be long before we should hear more than one Voice saying, "Here am I, send me." For though our blessed Lord will own those only whom he appoints, and though it be his prerogative to "count men faithful, putting them into the ministry," yet, when the hearts of his people are once bent in this way, they shall neither be ashamed nor disappointed that wait for Him.

From what follows, it will be seen that I am fully aware of the recent attempts after what is here enforced, in one or two remote corners, and far be it from me to undervalue them. But these excellent men will most warmly approve of all that has been advanced, well knowing that the state of Ireland, when taken as a whole, not only justifies but demands every word. So, at least, it has seemed to the writer.

For many other particulars, however, I must be permitted to refer to the second edition of the *Historical Sketches of the Native Irish*. The following pages form a part of that volume abridged. The subject,

though by far the most important, continuing still to be *least regarded*, it has been printed in this cheap form for the sake of more general circulation.

In the Address to the Native Irish, there are several additions applicable to the present moment. Such as know English will, I hope, do me the favour to read the whole, as from a devoted Friend, who has long wished them the best of blessings. To those men especially, who have already found the way to life and immortality in the Sacred Volume, my heart has turned with peculiar interest and hope. To each and all of them I would only say—"Be not discouraged, a brighter day will dawn. The Prince of Peace, The King of Zion, who alone can qualify for the work of the Ministry, will yet raise up from among yourselves, more than one, who will demonstrate what your *Native tongue* can do in saving the souls of men, when once employed in obedience to his own Commission."

CHRISTOPHER ANDERSON.

EDINBURGH, }
19th February 1835. }

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PAST.

READING one day an account of Ireland, of comparatively recent date and considerable value, when referring to some of the Irish gentlemen resident in certain parts, who are able to speak in Irish and converse with the people, I found the writer add, in passing, that they are thus able not only to "ascertain their wants, but to assist with their advice, and restrain by admonition."

Any man, therefore, who, in these parts, cannot thus talk, let his profession be what it may, it seems cannot well do any thing of this sort—cannot ascertain these wants—assist with this advice—or restrain by this warning. I not only understand, but, in some degree, can confirm this remark, having, when in the country, tried the effect of only two or three words in Irish, and the response was immediate—they had reached the heart.

But then there *is* such a thing as the care of the soul,—there are wants of greater moment than any which relate to this transitory state of being,—there is advice, which may prepare for a dying hour,—admonition, which may avert dangers beyond it: and if Irish *is* necessary for the good and the comfort of these our countrymen, as peasantry, I presume it will not be denied that it must be much more so, when they are regarded not only as rational and intelligent, but accountable beings. But if so, to every minister of Christ, standing upon Irish ground, this is an important

and serious consideration. "Not having been able to speak Irish," must another day be regarded as a poor apology; and if there is to be such a thing hereafter as the confronting of parties, for the establishment of criminal neglect and greater condemnation,* the ability of Irishmen in higher walks to converse with their dependents on the affairs of this life may well be pondered by those whose duty it is, through the same medium, to "rest and expatiate on a life to come." Besides, not only by men of his own particular communion, but by all those who upon Irish ground have so long neglected a duty at once so manifest and incumbent, it should never be forgotten that a witness of no common character has gone before them—

——— Bedell's grave
Is in thy keeping—and with thee
Deposited, doth this man's holy dust
Await the archangel's call.—

But for the present, *sat verbum sapienti*; here at least I forbear to add more, and proceed to facts.

It is rather a singular circumstance, that at such a remote period in the history of Ireland as the fifteenth century, in the year 1483-4, we find an archbishop of Dublin petitioning parliament, and in *Norman-French* of course, to relieve him from the inconvenience which its outlawry of the Irish tongue had occasioned; nay, he succeeded in obtaining a statute to be passed, which explains the inconvenience. It shows, that because the English clergy were ignorant of the Irish tongue, the cure of souls in some parts of his diocese, in the very neighbourhood of Dublin, was "piteously neglected—*piteuxment neelected*;"—and it enacted, that he should have liberty to present natives to certain of his livings,—a thing which, at that time, under Richard the Third, and long before, was contrary to the statute-law.† The liberty here granted, however, was to last only for two years, which turned out to be the close of Richard's usurpation. It is true that, so far as the performances of public worship were concerned, an ability to hold conversation with the inhabitants was not requisite, as

* Matt. xii. 41, 42; Ezek. xxxiii. 8; Prov. xxiv. 11, 12.

† *Stat. 2 Rich. III. c. 10*, and 5 Ed. IV. anno 1465.

the service was conducted in Latin ; and yet it appears, from this application, that ignorance of the vernacular tongue was even then regarded as injurious to the interests of the natives ; so that the first testimony thus given, let it be observed, comes to us at a period previous to that which has been styled the Reformation.

I have spoken of this period as early, since it is three hundred and fifty years from the present day ; and it will remain for the reader to notice, whether the grievance referred to *has ever* been redressed. But there is another point of view in which such an incident should be observed, and that is with reference to the ages which had preceded it. It was now more than three hundred years since Henry II. had invaded Ireland, yet it should seem as if the Irish language were still almost universally prevalent. Whatever scepticism may exist as to earlier ages, therefore, if the precise extent to which the Irish tongue was then spoken can be ascertained, the reader should here be apprized of it before proceeding farther. The Irish septs or clans, it is admitted, " were still unconnected, and their attention confined to their local interests. Several lived peaceably in the English counties, but others maintained an independent state even in the very neighbourhood of Dublin."* Now, with respect to the language, there is a treatise or discourse in manuscript, extant in the library of Trinity College, in which the affairs of Ireland are copiously examined, the date of which cannot be later than the year 1494, and the researches of the author have been subsequently pronounced to be accurate. He recounts no less than sixty regions or districts, of different dimensions, still governed by Irish chieftains, according to their ancient laws and manners, together with a long catalogue of *English*, who had degenerated and renounced obedience to the English law and customs in several provinces. The Pale, as it has been called, he confines within the narrow bounds of half the counties of Uriel or Orgiel, Meath, Kildare, Dublin, and Wexford,—that is, in fact, only a narrow

* Leland, *ib.* p. 68.

stripe of territory along the east coast, from about Newry to Wexford,—and yet the common people of even these districts he represents as conforming to the Irish habit and *language*.* The truth is, that the intercourse with the Native Irish, by fostering, marriage, and alliance, was general, the Lord Deputy himself having set the example. The remedies proposed by this author I need not specify, my only object being to glance at the extent of the Irish language more than three hundred years after Henry the Second. Many of these remedies, however, were afterwards tried, as the discourse itself is said to have been presented to the King (Henry VII.) and his council.

Forty years later, the wide extent, if not universal prevalence, of the Irish tongue is manifest from the terms of a parliamentary statute. It was passed in 1537, the 28th year of Henry VIII., in which, bent only upon extending the English order, habit, and *language*, not the direct and real progress of *knowledge*, it was enacted, that “if any spiritual promotion within this land at any time become void, such as have title to nominate shall nominate to the same such a person as can speak English, and *none other*, unless there can be no person as can speak English will accept it; and if the patron cannot, within *three months*, get any such person that can speak English, then he shall cause *four* proclamations to be openly made, at four several market-days, in the next market-town adjoining to the said spiritual promotion, that if any fit person that can speak English will come and take the same, he shall have it; and if none come within five weeks after the first proclamation, then the patron may present any honest, able man, albeit he cannot speak English.” This, however, was not all. By the next clause of the same act, should the patron have nominated a *native* who could not speak English, contrary to the form here prescribed, the nomination was void, when the king presented; and should “the king be interrupted, he shall have a *quare impedit* against the disturber.” Nay, should the king present a man who

* *Pandarus, sive Salus Populi*. MS. Trin. Coll. Dublin.

could not speak English, contrary to the form, the presentation was void, and reverted to the patron. After all this, in the event of a native being the *only* person to be found and appointed, it was under an *oath* that he "endeavour himself to learn the English tongue and language, if he may learn and attain the same by possibility; and *another oath*, "that he shall, to his wit and cunning, endeavour himself to learn and teach the English tongue to all under his governance, and shall preach the word of God in English, *if he can preach*." The ecclesiastic, appointing any one, contrary to this form, to forfeit, for every time, L.3 : 6 : 8, one moiety to the king, the other to the pursuer; and every incumbent, for the first offence, six shillings and eightpence; for the second, twenty shillings; and for the third, his promotion itself!

Such was the act passed at this period in reference to all those natural signs which this ancient people had been accustomed to employ for ages, when communicating to each other their thoughts and intentions, their purposes and desires. So strange does the instrument of speech appear, when in the hands of a human legislator! The act itself might have been passed over, had it not been so frequently referred to, in subsequent generations, to enforce the purposes of a blind and baneful expediency, and because it may serve as a contrast to the noble exertions of Bedell in the following pages.

What steps were actually taken to enforce this act, it is unnecessary to inquire,—(the parliamentary commissioners of our day have said, it is impossible to ascertain),—but as to the state of the country, when the best of evidence was produced, only fifteen years after this, in 1552, no wonder that it was deplorable. "Hard it is," said Sir Thomas Cusack, the Lord Chancellor of Ireland under Edward VI., "that men should know their duties to God and the King, when they shall not hear teaching or preaching throughout the year." At a period when England had so far burst the shackles of ignorance, and when the common people were beginning to hear gladly, then it was that this Chancellor complained of Ireland,—"*Preaching we have*

none, which is our lack, without which the ignorant can have no knowledge.”* Meanwhile, says an authority which, on this department of Irish history, will not be questioned, “Even within the English pale the Irish language was become predominant;” and “in those tracts of Irish territory which intersected the English settlements, no other language was at all known; so that here the wretched flock was totally inaccessible to those *strangers* who had become their nominal pastors;” while, at the same moment, such men as “spoke to their countrymen in their *own* language were heard with attention, favour, and affection.”† It is true, that the year before this, 1551, the 5th of Edward VI., the English Common Prayer-Book had been ordered to be read in the Irish churches; but what could this avail in a country where the people, whether high or low, knew neither the meaning nor pronunciation of the language.‡

In the following reign, however, even these measures were abandoned, till the accession of Elizabeth, when they were again resumed. Two large English Bibles were then sent over in 1559, at her expense, for public perusal, and an opportunity was offered to the people for hearing them read in the cathedrals of Christ Church and St Patrick in Dublin: but this alteration had no other effect than that which might have been anticipated. It “disgusted the *natives* especially, who were not at all regarded in it,” the public worship being to them as unintelligible as ever. And what continued to be the condition of the country at large, or even as far as the English authority had extended, the language of the Irish parliament will best explain. The reader will observe it marks its preference for the Irish tongue; but then this act of Henry VIII., Elizabeth’s father, stood in the way, while now it seems that ministers speaking Eng-

* See Cusack’s Letter to the Duke of Northumberland, dated 1552. MSS. Trin. Coll. Dublin.

† Leland, ii. p. 91.

‡ At the same time I am aware that King Edward, in his instructions to Sir James Croft, wished the service to be translated into Irish; but this was only the first of a class, which may be entitled, “royal orders unfulfilled.”

lish were nowhere to be found ! Thus situated, what was to be done ? Hear the preamble to the Act of Uniformity :—“ And forasmuch as in most places of this realm, there cannot be found English ministers to serve in the churches or places appointed for common prayer,—and that if some good meane were provided, that they might use the prayers, &c. in *such* language as they might *best understand*, the due honour of God should be thereby much advanced ; and for that, also, that the same may not be in their native language, as well for difficultie to get it printed, as that few in the whole realm can read the Irishe letters :—We do therefore most humbly beseech your Majesty, that it may be enacted by the authority of this present parliament, that in every such church, where the common minister hathe *not* the use of the English tongue, it shall be lawful to say or use all their common and open prayer in the *Latin* tongue.” Enacted accordingly, so it was, by the statute 2d of Elizabeth, sect. xiii. anno 1559–60. If any thing can be more lamentable than the policy thus adopted towards our Native Irish countrymen, it is the coolness with which it has been referred to by historians since. More than 200 years after this, so late as 1783, says Leland, “ if this did not *effectually* provide for the edification of the people, it, at least, served to sheathe the acrimony of their prejudices against the reformed worship !”

Eleven years after this act, however, in 1571, the Queen herself provided a printing-press and Irish types ; but no one had as yet urged the imperative necessity of proclaiming the Word of Life in the vernacular tongue. The first individual who advised this did so with great earnestness, in consequence of his visiting the country itself, having “ passed thorough eche province, and bene almost in eche county thereof.” This was Sir Henry Sidney, the affectionate play-fellow and companion of Edward the Sixth, and in whose arms he expired, now appointed Lord Deputy of Ireland. “ His disposition,” says Dr Powell, “ was rather to seek after the antiquities and the weal-public of these countries which he governed, than to obtain lands and revenues within the same ; for I know not one foot of land that he had either

in Wales or Ireland.”* On returning from his tour, which lasted six months, having resolved to lay before Queen Elizabeth the state of the country, and the absolute necessity for ministers of the word ; in his letter, dated 28th April 1576, he says, “ In choyce of which ministers for the remote places where the Englishe tongue is not understood, it is most necessarie that soche be chosen as can speake *Irishe*, for which searche would be made first and spedylie in your own universities ; and any found there well affected in religion, and well conditioned beside, they would be animated by your Majestie ; yea, though it were somewhat at your Highness’ chardge ; and on peril of my liffe you shall fynde it retorned with fayme before three yeares be expired. If there be no soche there, or not inough, for I wish tene or twelve at the least to be sent, then I do wish that you would write to the Regent of Scotlande, where, as I learne, there are many that are of *this* language, that he would prefer to your Highness so many as shall seem good to you to demande of honest, zealous, and learned men, *and that could speak this language* ; and though for a while your Majestie were at some chardge, it were well bestowed, for in short time their own preferments would be able to suffice them, and in the meane time thousands would be gayned to Christ, that now are lost, or left at the woorst.”

Twenty-five years after this letter, in 1601, Lord Bacon, then in retirement, and reflecting on the state of this country, wrote a letter to Secretary Cecil, enclosing certain “ considerations touching the Queen’s service,” in which he embraces “ the causes of Ireland, if they be taken by the right handle ;” “ to which purpose,” says he, “ I send you mine opinion, without labour of words, in the enclosed ; and *sure I am*, that if you shall enter into the matter according to the vivacity of your own spirit, nothing can make you a more gainful return.” The second division of this paper is entitled “ The Recovery of the Hearts of the People.” Towards this he says, “ There be three things *in natura rerum*. 1. Religion. 2. Justice and protection. 3. Obligation and

* Powell’s History of Wales.

reward."—"For religion, to speak first of society and then of policy, all divines do agree, that if consciences be to be enforced (invigorated) at all, two things must precede; the one, means of *instruction*; the other, time of operation; neither of which they have yet had." Accordingly, when Bacon comes to specify his "course of advancing religion indeed," he proposes sending "some good preachers, especially of that sort which are zealous persuaders and not scholastical, to be resident in the principal towns; replenishing the college begun at Dublin, placing good men to be bishops, and taking care of the versions of bibles and catechisms, and other books of instruction, into the *Irish* language."

In the year 1620, a letter was addressed to the Lord Deputy of Ireland, Lord Chichester, by King James I. "Because we understand," said his Majesty, "that the simple natives of that our kingdom are still kept in darkness, &c., which *proceedeth through want of Ministers who could speak their own language*, whom they may understand,"—and because the College was founded "principallie" with this in view;—therefore he added, "when any livings that are not of any very great value fall void among the meere Irish, these men (towardlie young men, alreadie fitted with the knowledge of the Irish tongue) to be thought upon *before others*, or to be placed with other able ministers that possess livings among the meere Irishe (where, for the defect of the language, they are able to do but *little good*), to be interpreters to them, and to be maintained by them after they are made fit for that imployment."

Thus we have Sidney and Lord Bacon urging the necessity of an Irish ministry, and the King himself still more urgent;—and what was the result? One solitary instance of compliance! This was a Scotch Highland minister, Mr Donald M'Feig, who was incumbent of Cahercomney, in the county of Limerick: at least so it should seem by the records of the Board of First Fruits.

In the second year of the following reign, 1626, Charles I. wrote to Archbishop Ussher much in the same strain, not only ratifying the instructions of his father to the Lord Deputy, but desiring to "make some necessarie addition to

the same." He therefore requires of Ussher to "take especial care, that the people there may be instructed in the principles of religion by those to whom it appertayneth; and that the New Testament and Book of Common-Prayer, translated into *Irish*, be frequently used in the parishes of the Irishrie; and that every non-resident there do constantly keepe and continue one to read service in the *Irish* tongue, as is expressly commanded by the said orders" issued by King James. The fact is, the propositions in this letter were suggested to the King by Archbishop Ussher.* By this time nearly fifty years had passed away since Sir Henry Sidney had strongly urged the absolute necessity of ministers in the native language being employed—Lord Bacon, James, Charles, and Ussher, having followed him, and each of them alike in earnest in recommending the *same* measure, but literally nothing had as yet been done.

At this juncture the immortal William Bedell arrived in Dublin, and no sooner had he set his foot upon Irish ground, than he saw the path of duty, and almost immediately turned his attention to the preparation of young Irishmen for public usefulness. Where he had found a suitable person does not appear; but although he was only two years Provost of Trinity College, even during that short period he had instituted an "Irish lecture." So in the year 1629, only the third of his residence in Ireland, the Lord Chancellor, having occasion to write to Primate Ussher, says—"The King likes wondrous well of the Irish lecture begun by Mr Bedell, and the course of sending such young men as your Grace mentions." Bedell himself, also, in a letter to Ussher, the 18th September, 1630, mentions one of these young men as having translated his catechism into Irish, who had been instructed at the *Irish lecture* in Dublin, instituted in the time of his provostship.

Four years after this, at the convocation of 1634, we find

* Lay hands suddenly on no man, was a maxim of the Primate's; yet in the course of his life he ordained one man, who, though not versed in the learned languages, was well acquainted with the Scriptures and books of practical divinity. When this person first applied to Ussher, he remarked that his preaching would be of little use, unless it was understood by the people. The man promised to acquire the language of the natives; and effecting this in one year, he was then ordained, when his ministry is said to have been very useful.

the subject referred to, at least with reference to the Scriptures being read, and service performed in the Irish tongue. To the instructions then given, however, alas ! no person paid any attention except Bedell, notwithstanding the success which had attended his exertions under circumstances so unpropitious. The melancholy state of his diocese need not here be described ;* but nothing could discourage him from following out his principles. The propositions of statesmen, the official recommendations of royalty, the deliberations and resolutions of a convocation, were not necessary to kindle his zeal in the cause. The sentiments contained in them all, when urging a ministry in the language of this or of any other country, were indeed his own, and it is known also that they were his before arriving in Ireland ; but, in his mind, these sentiments were also living principles of action, such as no power upon earth could have generated, and from which no consideration under heaven could turn him aside. It is indeed refreshing to meet with such a man at such a time, devoted to the best interests of a people who had been so long neglected, more especially when it is observed that they have been neglected since, nay are *neglected still*. In all stages of society those unquestionably deserve grateful and everlasting remembrance, who, outstripping the rest of their contemporaries, rise up in solitary majesty amidst a host of prejudices, combating intrepidly on one side, however assailed on the other. And though it is humiliating to reflect, that the perplexities which Bedell was called to suffer arose simply from his upright zeal, in fulfilling the recommendations and recorded sentiments of many preceding years—to him belongs the credit of having first trodden a path in which other men of our own day *must* yet follow.

The existing state of things in the county of Cavan being once ascertained and surveyed by Bedell, not a day was lost in applying to his work. His setting himself in good earnest to acquire the vernacular tongue, was soon observed to be regarded by the natives in the light of a great compli-

* See "The Historical Sketches" for this and many other interesting particulars respecting Bedell.

ment, while it lent grace and consistency to his fixed purpose with regard to others who were called to engage in the ministry around him. Both his dioceses being inhabited almost wholly by Native Irish, an ability to preach in their language "he looked upon as an *absolutely necessary* qualification in every minister to be employed under him; and therefore he rejected several simply for want of this." Assured that the natives could not understand the way of salvation, except through the medium of the language which they had used from infancy,—in all his collations he kept this in view, and, on such occasions, was in the habit of addressing the individual in the following terms:—"Obtesting you in the name of the Lord, and enjoining you, by virtue of that obedience which you owe to the Chief Shepherd, that you will diligently feed his flock committed to your care, which he purchased with his own blood, that you instruct them in the Catholic faith, and perform divine offices in a tongue *understood by the people*." In his own church, while the Scriptures in Irish were read, he was always present, till at last he was well able to engage in the service himself. The efforts of this enlightened man were not in vain. Not only were he and others made useful to the people, but some men of talent were converted to God, and several of these afterwards employed by him in preaching to their countrymen. Bedell, however, did nothing superficially. He had no idea of spending time in winning over any man to a mere creed or solitary scriptural opinion. Into such, therefore, as now came willingly for instruction, "he took great pains" to convey "a true sense of religion," that so they might prove Christians indeed. The trumpet gave a certain sound, but the object of his desire was to be found not only warning every man, but "teaching every man in all wisdom, that he might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." Such exertions will ever be found the best preparation for seasons of agitation, turbulence, or distress.

With the death of this excellent man, however, all actual exertion died likewise. His Irish manuscript was allowed to *remain for above forty years* without being printed; and as for

any man preaching to the people in their own language during that period, frequent attempts have ended in discovering not more than two or three instances. These, however, certainly deserve to be recorded, were it only for the purpose of preserving the chain of attestation to the necessity of measures which have not been pursued even to the present hour !

The first of these instances was in the time of the Protectorate. Amidst the perplexities of that period, various individuals, equally eminent for learning and piety, visited Ireland, and the condition of the Native Irish could not escape their notice. In the year 1649, Dr Owen having one day called on General Fairfax, just before leaving London for Coggeshall, Cromwell came in ; and this being the first time he had met with Owen in private, he walked up to him, and laying his hand on his shoulder, said,—“ Sir, you are the man with whom I must be acquainted.” Taking him aside into the garden, he mentioned his intended expedition to Ireland, and requested his company with a view to the affairs of Trinity College. After using entreaty, Cromwell had to employ his authority ; and Owen returned, not to regret his compliance, but to urge it upon others to cross the Channel too. Arriving in July 1649, he took up his residence in Trinity College, and afterwards in Dublin Castle. Here, though not in his usual health, and burdened with manifold employments, he was at the same time engaged, he says, in “ constant preaching to a numerous multitude of as thirsting a people after the Gospel as he had ever conversed with.”* Owen remained only about six months in Ireland, but he saw enough to affect his mind deeply, and on his return had resolved that others should, if possible, feel with him. Accordingly, on the 28th of February 1650, a day of humiliation throughout the kingdom, having returned to London, and being called to preach in public before the Parliament, his heart was full of anxiety respecting Ireland. In the course of his sermon, therefore, he addressed Parliament in the following terms :—

* Owen's Works, 8vo, vol. v. p. 649.

“ God hath been faithful in doing great things for you, be faithful in this one,—do your utmost for the preaching of the Gospel in Ireland. Give me leave to add a few motives to this duty. 1. They want it. No want like theirs who want the Gospel. I would there were for the present one Gospel preacher for every walled town in the English possessions in Ireland. The land mourneth, and the people perish for want of knowledge; many run to and fro, but it is upon other designs—knowledge is not increased. 2. They are sensible of their wants, and cry out for supply. The tears and cries of the inhabitants of Dublin after the manifestations of Christ are ever in my view. If they were in the dark, and loved to have it so, it might somewhat close a door on the bowels of our compassion; but they cry out of their darkness, and are ready to follow every one, to have a candle. If their being without the Gospel move not our hearts, it is hoped their importunate cries will disquiet our rest, and wrest help as a beggar doth an alms.” Again he says, “ What then shall we do? This thing is often spoken of, seldom driven to a close! *First, Pray the Lord of the harvest, that he would send out, that he would thrust forth labourers into his harvest.* The labourers are ready to say, ‘ There is a lion in the way, and difficulties to be contended withal.’ And to some men it is hard seeing a call of God through difficulties; when, if it would but clothe itself with a few carnal advantages, how apparent is it to them! Be earnest then with the *Master* of these labourers, in whose hand is their life and breath, and all their ways, that he would powerfully *constrain them to be willing to enter into the fields that are white for the harvest.* *Secondly, Make such provision, that those who will go may be fenced from outward straits and fears, so far as the uncertainty of human affairs in general, and the present tumultuating perturbations will admit.* And let not this, I beseech you, be the business of an *unpursued* order; but, *thirdly, Let some be appointed (generals die and sink by themselves) to consider this thing, and to hear what sober proposals may be made by any whose hearts God shall stir up to so good a work. This, I say, is a work wherein God expecteth faithfulness*

from you : stagger not at his promises nor your own duty. However, by all means possible in this business, I have strived to deliver my own soul !”

This powerful appeal was not in vain ; and the effects which followed it well deserve to be recorded ; though I am again under the necessity of referring to the *second* edition of the “ Historical Sketches” for various additional particulars.

It was in July 1649 that Owen went to Ireland, where he remained till January following. On the 28th February he preached the sermon just quoted ; and one week after this, that is, on the 8th of March 1650, Parliament passed an ordinance for the encouragement of religion and learning in Ireland. By this act, certain lands were devoted to the support of Trinity College and the endowment of its professors ; for erecting another college in Dublin, and maintaining its teachers ; and for the erection of a free school, as well as the support of the master and scholars. Nor was this “ the business of an unpursued order,” as Owen had deprecated. Parliament immediately appointed four commissioners to proceed to Ireland ; and also requested Dr Samuel Winter of Queen’s College, Cambridge, then at Cottingham, near Hull, to accompany them. Renouncing a living of L.400 per annum, and without stipulating what support he should receive for himself and his family, he consented and went. His appointment was first fixed at only L.100 a-year ; but, being possessed of some property, he resolved to lay himself out for the benefit of Ireland. Being appointed Provost of Trinity College, under his care it revived and flourished ; for so zealous was he in promoting its interests, that, upon his leaving it before the Restoration, it was indebted to him a considerable sum, which he had disbursed for the public good out of his own property.

Owen, however, in his discourse before Parliament, had also said, “ How is it that Jesus Christ is in Ireland only as a lion staining all his garments with the blood of his enemies, and none to hold him up as a lamb sprinkled with his own blood to his friends ? Is it the sovereignty and in-

terest of *England* that is alone to be there transacted? For my part, I see no farther into the mystery of these things, but that I could heartily rejoice that, innocent blood being expiated, the Irish might enjoy Ireland so long as the moon endureth, so that Jesus Christ might possess the Irish." Accordingly, four days more had only elapsed, when the Parliament also resolved to send over six of the most eminent preachers to Dublin; but the number who went to Ireland ultimately was far from being confined to six. Besides Dr Winter, the city enjoyed the labours of Mr Thomas Patient, Mr John Murcot, Mr Christopher Blackwood, Dr Thomas Harrison, Mr Charnock, Mr Samuel Mather, Mr Edward Veal, Dr Daniel Williams, Mr Nathaniel Mather, and others; not to mention those ministers who either went at their own charge, or were sent and settled for a season in Waterford and Clonmel, Cork and Kilkenny, Limerick and Galway, Lurgan and Carrickfergus.

The condition of the Native Irish, for whose sake, chiefly, these names are mentioned, was not overlooked. The commissioners and Dr Winter having landed in Ireland, within two years we find a valuable Irish catechism, with rules for reading the language, had been printed; and with regard to an Irish ministry, in the books of the Privy Council Office we find the following extract, dated from Dublin Castle, and subscribed by the four parliamentary commissioners:—"Upon reading the report of Dr Winter, Dr Harrison, Mr Wooten, and Mr Chambers, touching Mr James Carey, and of his fitness and abilities to preach the word, both in English and *Irish*, and upon consideration had thereof, and of the usefulness of gifts in order to the conversion of the poore ignorant native, it is thought fitt and ordered, that the said Mr Carey doe preach to the *Irish* at Bride's parish once every Lord's day, and that he doe occasionally repair to Trim and Athye, to preach as aforesaid, and that for his care and paines therein he be allowed the sallary of sixty pounds p. annum, to be paid quarterly, &c. Dated at Dublin Castle the 3d of March 1656.

"R. P——, M. C——, R. G——, M. T——."

This attestation in favour of preaching to the natives in

Irish is the more to be regarded, as being an independent testimony, borne by men who were called to visit the country for a season, and impartially to observe and record its necessities ; and there can be no doubt that, had they been permitted to remain in Ireland, the object would not only have been kept in view, but pursued. Before, however, even another testimony can be found in favour of such a course, most of the existing generation must pass away, just as others had done before it.

Bedell had now been dead many years,—but the seed sown, though long buried, it appears, could not die. Dr Thomas Price, a native of Wales, educated at Trinity College, Dublin, and subsequently a senior fellow, had been *ordained* by Bedell, and afterwards became Archdeacon of Kilmore. Whether, when Bishop of Kildare, from 1660 to 1667, he had it in his power to follow out his principles, does not appear ; but having been appointed Archbishop of Cashel, and though, at the period to which I allude, in the seventy-ninth year of his age, we find that he had not even then forgotten the solemn “obtestation” delivered to him in Kilmore so many years before. Price was born in 1599 : it was now 1678, when a copy of the Irish Testament was not to be seen ! but an Irish Prayer-Book and Psalms, in handsome folio, having been discovered by Dr Andrew Sall, and presented to Dr Price, he appointed them to be read in his cathedral. Before this period, however, having been for ten years resident at Cashel, he had paid special attention to the Native Irish, and is said to have “maintained many Irish clergymen to preach to them in their country language.”* Whether these Irish ministers were numerous, as here stated, is, I think, doubtful ; but there can be no question as to Dr Price’s zeal on this subject. In the year 1676, in addressing the Earl of Essex, then Lord Lieutenant, Dr Jones, Bishop of Meath, urging the necessity of attention to the Irish language, then adds, “I cannot but mention and recommend as a precedent to others, the zeal of the present Archbishop of Cashel, who has set himself on

* Ware’s Bishops, Dublin, 1764, p. 487.

that work industriously, by instructing the Irish in their own language, and hath already gathered the comfortable fruits of his labour,—the number also of such increasing.” These measures, it is true, met with no small opposition, while the Archbishop is represented as maintaining an uninterrupted struggle with every one on this subject, and continued a decided advocate for preaching in Irish to the day of his death, in August 1684, at the advanced age of eighty-five.*

Dr Sall, just noticed, was the author of the preface prefixed to the Irish New Testament; and so impressed was he, at the same time, with the necessity for an Irish ministry, that he concluded that preface in the following terms:—“ Finally, students in schools and universities, who design to live by the cure of souls in Ireland, shall, upon a serious consideration, find it their *precise duty* to procure such knowledge in the language of the natives as may enable them to help and instruct the souls committed to their charge, and of which they are to give account to God; for, notwithstanding all the statutes and endeavours used to bring this whole nation to a knowledge of the English tongue, experience shows it could not be effected; and it is apparent, that in Ireland there are many parishes, baronies, and whole counties, in which the far greater number of the common people do understand no other language but the Irish! This being so, how can it be presumed of any godly pastor of souls in such places, that he *will not* procure the spiritual welfare of those men by the sweat of whose brows he hath his bread, enabling himself to preach, read to, or converse with them in the language they can understand?—that being the way to gain their good-will and thereby to win their souls to God: For very true and experienced is that which Aristotle said, *Plurimas amicitias taciturnitas sola dissolvit*,—(silence alone dissolves many friendships),—want of communication breeds want of love and union.”

Dr Jones, Bishop of Meath, already mentioned, was deeply concerned on the subject of Irish preaching, and it required but little to kindle his zeal. In early life he had been Dean

* Boyle's Works, folio, vol. i. 603-605.

of Kilmore and Ardagh, and affords another proof of the power of Bedell's example. No sooner were inquiries made after Bedell's manuscript of the Old Testament, than the recollections of former days returned upon him. Immediately he opened a correspondence with the Hon. Robert Boyle, and in his very first letter, dated 4th August 1680, he wrote as follows :—" I have dealt with our present Provost of this College of Dublin (Dr Marsh), that he, according to what was some time practised by Dr Bedell, his predecessor, would encourage the reading of Irish,—and that Irish prayers, &c., as others, might be publicly used in the College, for thereby fitting our labourers for the harvest of souls, which may, by God's blessing such endeavours, be hopefully expected." Nine months after this, on the 3d of May 1681, he writes from Dublin to Mr Boyle,—" I shall shut this up with what I have in my last given you joyfully, and with what is since then, of the progress of Irish preaching in this College-chapel. The first Sunday in each month is designed for that. The first, as you heard, was on Easter-day; the next, which was that day month, was so enlarged that the whole area of the chapel, with rooms adjoining, above and below, was unusually thronged. Among these were Lord Dillon, and other eminent persons. The Lord Lieutenant intends to afford his presence for farther countenance and encouragement." This warm friend, Dr Jones, died on the 5th of January 1682: but the above, like every other similar attempt, withered and died away under another blight of mistaken political expediency.

In point of time, the next feeble effort in the way of addressing the natives of Ireland is rendered interesting, from its affording the earliest modern *proof* with which we are acquainted of the identity of the Gaelic and Irish languages. After the siege of Londonderry, 1688-9, many of the Native Irish having left their habitations in the barony of Innishowen, Donegal, and gone to the south with the army, several families from the Highlands of Scotland came and settled there. Not understanding English, they petitioned Dr King, Bishop of Derry, for a minister who should be able to preach in their own language. Two ministers were

readily granted, one of whom held an Irish living, and the other received a competent allowance from the Bishop. The consequence of which was, that not only the Highlanders but the Irish attended, to the number of four and sometimes five hundred, none of whom could understand an English sermon.

About the same period, many families from the Western Isles landed near Carrickfergus, and settled in the northern parts of the county of Antrim. At first they went to church; but not understanding what was said, they gave it up, and, had nothing been done, the consequences must have been melancholy: but the effects produced in Donegal were so manifest, that certain individuals petitioning the Bishop of Down, a Mr Duncan M'Arthur was sent to them, on whose ministry they attended with great satisfaction. At his death, a Mr Archibald M'Callum succeeded, on whose ministry the Irish as well as the Highlanders attended. He was rendered useful to both parties; and, for ten or fifteen years, there were, besides Mr M'Callum, three, if not four, preachers of a similar description, each of them having considerable congregations. All such efforts, however, were soon discouraged! How many Highlanders emigrated I have not been able to ascertain, but their descendants going on to increase, are now mingled with the Native Irish population; yet is there, at the present moment, no such person as a Gaelic minister in the north of Ireland, although, in a very short period, if not at first, he would be equally intelligible even to the *Irish* as if he had been born in the country. Surely every Scots Highlander will not read this in vain.

In the year 1702, one interesting case occurred of an Irish clergyman being impressed with his obligations to attend to the natives, and communicate with them through the medium of their vernacular tongue,—Mr Nicholas Brown, rector of the parishes of Donaghcavey, Dromore, and Rossory, in the counties of Fermanagh and Omagh. Applying himself with industrious zeal to the interests of the natives around him, he became a *perfect master of the language*. *In the first instance*, he made it his business to gain the

affections of the people by *kind and humane treatment*, and, observing that they were wonderfully pleased with *hearing divine worship in their own tongue*, he took every opportunity of thus instructing them,—holding public meetings, and visiting them in their cottages. Mr Brown, it will be observed, had three livings, but his preaching in Irish was not confined to one. From 1702 to the end of 1705 he laboured in the parish of Rosorry, in which part of the town of Enniskillen is situated. Then, removing to Dromore and Donaghcavey, contiguous livings, in the county of Omagh, he continued the same course with more success, and it was while here employed that a Mr William Grattan, of Enniskillen, visited him on his deathbed. After his decease, an attestation to the value and importance of his exertions was subscribed by the Provost of the town, Mr William Ball, and fifteen burgesses or inhabitants, in which they say, “To this day (28th January 1712), the memory of Mr Brown is, upon that account, valuable among the natives of these parts, as in their common discourse we have often heard them declare.”

About the time of his death, but in a part of the country far distant from Mr Brown, another solitary instance occurred of an Irish clergyman, who engaged strenuously on behalf of the best interests of the natives. The Rev. Walter Atkins, treasurer of the cathedral church of Cloyne, being appointed Vicar of Middleton, half-way between Cork and Youghal, resolved to acquire a competent knowledge of the Irish language. The Earl of Inchiquin having furnished him with an Irish Prayer-Book, which for a number of years he continued to use, the voices of the natives were heard in the Lord's Prayer, and the responses before it; the attendance was good, and his labours most acceptable. Now here is a parish, in which, at the distance of one hundred and twenty years, “the lower classes commonly speak Irish.” This is stated in a statistical account of the parish published in 1819; and yet under the head entitled “Suggestions for Improvement and Means for meliorating the Condition of the People,” all that is printed is the single monosyllable—*None*.

Besides Mr Brown and Mr Atkins, there were several other ministers who followed their example, and with corresponding success. Some of their hearers were not merely pleased but much affected when hearing the word of God; and two men of thirty years of age bought primers, and learned to read, that they might be able for themselves to search the Scriptures.

In the month of June 1709, we find the Lower House of Convocation resolving, "that some fit persons be provided and encouraged to preach, catechize, and perform divine service in the Irish tongue, at such times and places as the ordinary of each diocese, with the consent of the incumbent of the parish where such offices shall be performed, shall direct: That such clergymen of each diocese as are qualified by their skill in the Irish language for this work, and are willing to undertake it, may have the preference, not only in their own parishes, but in any other part of the diocese." Again, in 1710, as soon as the convocation had assembled, the Lower House again took up the subject, and resolved—"It will be requisite that a competent number of ministers duly qualified to instruct the natives of this kingdom, and perform the offices of religion to them *in their own language*, be provided, and encouraged by a suitable maintenance."

Surely, after so many resolutions, the reader, had he not read the previous pages, would now exclaim, "At last some steps are about to be taken!" But, no; each of them, and in succession, he is to regard as merely, in Owen's language, "the business of an *unpursued order*." The last of them was engrossed in the bill just mentioned; and the bill being prepared and *passed*, was sent up to the Lords, but just as it was brought to the door of the House, Parliament had adjourned! Too late to be passed into a law that session, *the subject was never again revived from that day to this*. This said resolution was passed in 1710, one hundred and twenty-five years ago,—three generations have since that time passed away, and the fourth, already far on its way, must soon follow to the grave!

While such resolutions were discussing, and passing, and

repassing, Primate Marsh, long satisfied as to the necessity for such efforts, united with some of his clergy in a subscription for maintaining two ministers or missionaries to preach in Irish to the natives of Armagh; and Dr Hickman, Bishop of Derry, with his clergy, did the same for that district of country; but they both died in the same month of the same year, November 1713—the latter in London, the former, aged 76, in Dublin; and with them, and one or two of their contemporaries, seems to have expired all disposition or desire to obey the Saviour's commission in the Irish tongue.

I do not forget George Berkeley, the Bishop of Cloyne, who, in 1735, put many important questions to his countrymen on both sides of the Channel, in his tract entitled "The Querist." He asks (No. 260) "Whether there be *any* instance of a people's being converted, in a Christian sense, otherwise than by preaching to them and instructing them *in their own language?*" But to this, as well as many other queries, no proper, no practical answer has been given to the present hour. On the contrary, one of *his* successors, who, fifty years later, wrote a tract on the state of the Irish church, which reached to the seventh edition, talks in it, wildly, of the Irish language, where it obtains, being an *insurmountable* obstacle to any intercourse with the people!

Here, then, let the reader pause for a few moments, and look back, or look forward—for here, alas! the meagre history of preaching the everlasting Gospel to the Native Irish in their vernacular tongue comes to an end, and that throughout the whole course of the eighteenth century! To thousands in Britain this must appear altogether incredible; but of the last century as well as others the retrospect is a peculiarly painful one as it regards the immortal interests of this ancient people.

I have before me a small tract by the deceased Dr Coke, published in 1801; but mine is actually a reprint at Philadelphia, in *America*, dated in July of that year, which contains the first intimation of any reviving interest on this subject.* By this it appears that two or three individuals,

* As if to provoke the people of this country to jealousy, this reprint

for two years, had been engaged in preaching to the people in their own language. And now, at the distance of so many years, after nearly a century of silence, what were the effects? Just such as might have been expected, and such as had been always fully realized in past generations. The old men and women drew near and heard with deep concern, "and when they heard them speak in the (Irish) tongue, they kept the more silence." The Irish language seemed to possess a charm in their ears, which even amazed the speaker, and old critics in it, who came to judge, went away, not unfrequently, with the tear in their eye. In 1805, there is said to have been eight individuals so qualified for addressing their countrymen: but at present I am not aware that there are more than a few, and comparatively very few who are thus engaged,—and their efforts all along, though of an essentially important character, have not been stationary or permanent in any one place.

Such, then, is the whole of the poor account of what has been already done, and of the manner in which, for ages, the paramount duty of preaching the word of life to the Native Irish has been treated by the nation at large. Sir Henry Sidney, whom this people used to style "the good Lord Deputie," was the first to recommend this, after perambulating the whole country, and the reader has seen how warmly he did so. Nearly *two hundred and sixty years* have passed away, and see how we have trifled with the authority of Him who is higher than the kings of the earth!

Without any regard to party, or party-names, or a party-purpose, I have gleaned every particle of information which I could find, and I believe there never has been any account so full and circumstantial laid before the public eye before; and yet, alas! this is all that can be collected or said on the

was actually with the view of recommending the subject to the *Americans*, and securing from them some pecuniary aid. In conclusion, the writer, speaking of an Irish ministry, says, "It is my humble judgment, that the whole empire is, in a political view, concerned in its success; but that which, above all things, should influence us, is the salvation of souls. The Native Irish have passions the most susceptible of impression of any people I believe in Europe: if, therefore, their warm affections can be engaged on the side of truth, they will *probably become one of the most religious nations on the globe.*"

subject. When one looks over it, well may he feel astonished and inquire, But is it possible? is any thing like this the actual condition of Ireland? It cannot be.—On this side of the British Channel the light of that Sabbath never returns, in which the glad news of salvation through a Saviour's blood, are not proclaimed, regularly, in *four* distinct languages. It is not that there are two or three individuals wandering up and down through Wales, the Highlands, and the Isle of Man, preaching to any casual number who may choose to stop and hear. No, there is the Gaelic and the Welsh minister, properly so called. Many imperfections may exist in each of these districts in Britain; but, on the other hand, in how many pleasing instances there is the minister well qualified, and fixed to his post: He appears at the appointed hour,—the voice of praise and prayer is heard; and whether it be in English or Gaelic, in Welsh or Manx, the people hear, in their own tongue, the wonderful works and ways of God. On the morning of the returning Sabbath, many a Welshman, with the book of God in his possession, finds his way to the well-known spot, where he has long regularly listened to the man, who, "commanding away the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully," has regularly, as the day returned, "by manifestation of the truth, commended himself to every one's conscience in the sight of God—warning every man, and teaching every man, in all wisdom, that he might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."

And surely, replies, it may be even my reader, you do not mean to insinuate that such things are not to be found among a similar population in Ireland, and a population *three times* the number of all the Highlanders, and Welsh, and Manxmen in Britain? No, my reader, I do not mean to insinuate, but to assert it. Instances there are, in various quarters, in which, through the medium of their native language, the poor people are occasionally dissuaded or warned against the practice of vice; but with regard to the *standing ordinance* of preaching, the scriptural exposition of God's most holy word, or obsequious conformity to

the high *commission of our Redeemer*, now hanging over us in all its original force and obligation, all this has yet to be known and felt among the Native Irish !

In reference to the country at large, I know of three or four ministers, stationary, who are able to preach in Irish, and who, especially of late, have felt the vast importance of the subject.* Recently there may be, and I hope there are others who are acquiring, if they have not yet acquired the language ; but what are these to the field before us ? Yet, with these exceptions, did I know of any other instances in which the minister comes forward with regularity as the day returns, having for his grand object, in his own pulpit, to preach to his own stated congregation, the everlasting Gospel in the Irish language, I should delight to mention them ; but if such exist, I know it not. And as for even the large cities and towns in that fine country—what would be thought if I could say we have no such thing as a Gaelic chapel, where the Gospel is proclaimed, in Glasgow, Inverness, or Edinburgh—no such thing as a Welsh chapel, for a similar purpose, in Liverpool, Bristol, or London, and in some of which it may soon become, if it is not already, an imperative duty, to have an *Irish* one ? Yet nothing of a similar kind yet exists either in Dublin or Cork, in Limerick or Galway, and many other parts, where the call for it is far louder than that which led to the existence of a Welsh or Gaelic ministry in the cities or towns of Britain !

In few words, there is at the present moment, not one single building in all Ireland, expressly dedicated to the infinitely-important purpose of proclaiming the message of salvation in the Irish tongue. Here is the fact on which the public eye should rest. More than three millions of intelligent and accountable beings, and these our own countrymen, dwelling in a land which for a period extending over twenty generations has been nominally united to our own, have not one single building dedicated to the purpose now mentioned. Since we have enjoyed, so richly, the invaluable

* "I wish," says one of them, "there was a professor of Irish appointed in Trinity College—all the ministers of the Gospel should know the *Irish language* upon *Irish ground*."

benefit in our own tongue, and all the while have been enjoying it, more than seven generations of this interesting people have already passed away! And should we reckon from that absurd and most injurious act of Henry VIII. in 1537, the tenth generation is now daily passing away before our eye!

I very well know it will be said here,—“But the Scriptures have been printed in Irish.” Yes, in conformity with the manner in which the language has always been read, it is at last restored to its just claims upon us, and the Irish Bible complete, in its own character, has *at last left the press!* “And then there are *Irish schools.*” Yes, by the voluntary bounty and exertions of benevolent individuals, yet far too scantily and too coldly supported, a certain proportion of the people have gladly, and with great rapidity, acquired the art of reading their native tongue. But then, above all, says another, there are the Scripture readers? * Yes, *comparatively* a few men are thus employed; but what is all this to the subject before us! Are all these, *united*, and though carried to the *utmost extent*, considered to be a substitute? Do *these* relieve us from the obligation to obey the express authority of Immanuel? The simple, or rather the grand question is this, Has He repealed *his own commission* with reference to this people; or have we found out a way, through books, and education, and reading, though it be his own word, which supersedes the necessity for doing simply what has long been done in every other part of our country; yes, and what must be done in every other nation, if His kingdom is to prosper there?

Much have we heard, indeed, in modern times of the noble invention of printing, and much respecting the power of education; and I do not imagine that any candid reader who has proceeded thus far, can suppose that the writer is indisposed to give to each its own appropriate place. At

* As for *English*, the proportion of those now learning to read is most cheering. Many on this side of the water are not aware that, upon an average, the number of such readers in Ireland is now *above* England! When the education of the whole kingdom, therefore, is referred to, this fact should be observed, and the blank as to reading Irish will then appear in its true character.

the same time, he conceives that they may not only be perverted, but *prevented* from doing that good which they otherwise might accomplish. For example, if they be permitted to occupy that place in our *esteem and expectation*, which belongs to a *divine and sovereign appointment*, then may they not only become as chaff when compared to the wheat; but, awakening the jealousy of Him, who will not give his glory to another, our employment of education only, and with all the energy which the art of printing has given to it, may turn out to be nothing more than giving activity to the powers of the mind, without directing and controlling their movements. Education will humanize and improve, in most instances; but to save from ultimate destruction, properly speaking, never was within its province, and never will be. Yet since the time in which many have been roused to see its necessity, there has been a phraseology often used respecting it by no means warrantable. Education, but above all, Scriptural education, will do much. There will always be an indescribable distance between a people so favoured and any other left without such means. But if we expect more from it than it has ever produced, and, above all, if we apply to it the language *furnished* to us in the Scripture, and which is there *exclusively* employed with reference to an institution of God's own sovereign appointment, we may be left to witness the impotence of education instead of its power. Hence we have read of the system of some one of these educational societies being so adapted for the *regeneration* of Ireland; and the terms employed in Scripture to the labourers in the vineyard of God, have been unsparingly employed by religious people to the exertions of Schoolmasters, or those who superintend them. This is not merely incorrect, but it is unwise and unwarrantable. Every one knows, that, in all such cases of agency, every thing depends upon the expectations and intentions of the agent; but the language referred to is teaching us to expect from him, what in a thousand instances the agent neither intends nor expects himself. The Schoolmaster may have gone abroad, and, if a man of principle, will *do great good*; but to apply to him or his efforts the lan-

guage of Sacred Writ, which regards another order of men and another exercise, is calculated to injure the work of his hands, as well as blind our own minds with respect to another duty,—a duty which, so far as the Native Irish are concerned, is at once not only incumbent, but as yet unfilled.

Unquestionably the privileges of reading the Scriptures, and being taught to read them in our native language, are of inestimable value; but were they even universally enjoyed, in no single instance could they supersede the necessity of *hearing* the word; of hearing it explained and applied by a Man who is apt to teach,—by one who himself believes, and therefore speaks. How frequently did the great Founder of our faith himself exclaim—"He that hath ears to hear, let him hear," that is, let him listen; and now, certainly, if the attention is to be awakened and fixed, if the general truths of revelation are to be applied to the consciences of men, or afterwards to the varied experience of the Christian life, *the human voice* can neither be dispensed with nor superseded. "When any important subject is presented to an audience," says a living writer, "with an ample illustration of its several parts, its practical improvement enforced, and its relation to the conscience and the heart insisted upon with seriousness, copiousness, and fervour, it is adapted in the nature of things to produce a more deep and lasting impression than can usually be expected from reading. He who knows how forcible are *right words*, and how apt man is to be moved by man, has consulted the constitution of our frame, by appointing an order of men, whose office it is to address their fellow-creatures on their eternal concerns. Strong feeling is naturally contagious; and if, as the wise man observes, 'as iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the countenance of a man his friend,' the combined effects of countenance, gesture, and voice, accompanying a powerful appeal to the understanding and the heart, on subjects of everlasting moment, can scarcely fail of being great. But, independently of the natural tendency of the Christian ministry to convert the soul and promote spiritual improvement, it derives its peculiar efficacy from its being a Divine

appointment. It is not merely a natural, it is also an *instituted* means of good ; and whatever God appoints by special authority, he graciously engages to bless, provided it be attended to with right dispositions, and proceed from right motives."

Is it possible, then, in the nature of things, that Ireland is doomed to remain longer in this condition ? That the Native Irish in particular are to continue from Sabbath to Sabbath to spend that day as they have done for ages ? It cannot be. Shall men continue to leave their native shores, and go far hence to the heathen only ? Will the inhabitants of Ireland itself, and those of Britain, continue to encourage and call forth such men for their work, and shall our countrymen and fellow-subjects be forgotten ? Shall we enforce the necessity and importance of acquiring the languages of India, of China, and Japan, in order to reach the heart through the ear ; and shall it seem a hard task to acquire the use of a tongue spoken by such a multitude in the immediate vicinity of our own, nay, spoken by our fellow-subjects, intersecting a sister country in almost every direction, and now dwelling to such extent in every city of the empire ?

THE PATH FOR THE FUTURE.

IN all that I have ventured to publish respecting this most interesting country, it may have been observed that I appeal from no party as such, to no other; from no party on this side of the Channel, to no party on that. No, I have felt mainly for the authority of Him who is higher than the highest; before whom "the nations are as the drop of a bucket, and who taketh up the isles as a very little thing,"—an authority too much, and in the present instance too long neglected by us all. I am desirous of addressing myself, not so much to measures as to men,—to such as are living with the Native Irish all around them,—to such, especially, as are already engaged in preaching the Divine Word; and that, not with reference to what they can *give* or bestow in such a cause, but what they might themselves *do* with heart and tongue.

A number of individuals there are, upon Irish ground, with whom the writer has repeatedly much enjoyed the opportunity of conversing, and there must be many more, who, with a heartfelt interest in the truths contained in the Sacred Volume, are already furnished with all the advantages of a liberal education. Oh! would they but add *yet this above all*, an ability to converse in the Irish language, it is impossible to say what might be the extent of their usefulness,—not in changing some isolated opinions, for this is worth no man's pains, and far below the ground on which the "legate of the skies" should stand,—but in spreading around them

the savour of life unto life, and advancing the kingdom of Him who died for us, and rose again.

For still, this ministry of the Divine Word, *in a language understood by the people*, returns upon us as the first and most important of all objects ; because it is a sovereign, it is a Divine appointment, under a commission which none can revoke. If men below occasionally press the other measures ; on this subject, the Christian, and especially those who have taken it in charge to minister the Divine Word, will hear the voice that cometh out from the throne. The terms of that Commission we need not repeat, every word of which is so pregnant with meaning and duty to us, so full of pity from above for man below. But every age presents some peculiar seduction from the plainest path of duty, whether to God or man ; and at a season when no day is allowed to pass without some eulogy on the power of the press, the noble invention of printing, or the sovereign efficacy of education, it is well to remember, that, however powerless may be the preaching of the present day, it was not so once, and ere long it will not be so again.

Men, indeed, have in all ages, perhaps very naturally, panted after the abridgment of labour. This is the age of discovery and invention. New and easy methods have been discovered, and applied with great effect in agriculture, mechanics, and education, yet certainly we need not expect that any human ingenuity shall ever invade this province of labour, or in any degree supersede its necessity. But, besides, there is such a thing as a country having sunk into such a state as in certain points shall set at defiance all the wisdom of man, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Whether such be the present condition of this most interesting part of the empire, I leave to the reader's own reflection ; but though it were, to the eye of an enlightened Christian there is nothing in all this which seems appalling. When the harvest stands ready for the sickle of Divine truth, and is just about to be gathered by the arm of the labourer, it is happily not supposed to have passed under some preparatory process of human device. A figure should never be pushed to an extreme, and here it is the Christian

minister's privilege that the figure does not harmonize with the natural world. "Say not ye there are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest." At whatever time, therefore, we see a country sunk in darkness and destitution, should there only spring up in it a spirit of inquiry, then may we say, that the fields are ready indeed for the moral husbandman. Now, whether other parts of the British dominions are as destitute as many districts in Ireland or not, yet where is there to be found such a spirit of inquiry as exists in these at present? What then remains for us, but to fall in with the simple device of Infinite Wisdom, and remember that the brighter days for this fine interesting country are to be ushered in, "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith Jehovah."

The Vernacular Tongue, or Key to the Heart.

To the ministers of Christ already stationed in Ireland, one cannot help saying, that, however the eye of sense and human reason may turn towards Britain, the eye of faith looks over to you, and the very places where you dwell. Your every abode appears to be a station marked out for proclaiming the truth. With fields of usefulness all around you, however unpromising to the eye of sense, yet to the eye of faith already white, what though you hear a language daily that you understand not? Methinks every word of it sounds like a cry for the one thing needful.* Nor is there

* When placed in circumstances analogous to yours, even as to the affairs of this present life, the necessity of such an acquirement as that which we now press, has been deeply felt. One of your own countrymen, and once Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, the late Marquis of Hastings, addressing one day the students in the College of Fort-William, with reference to India, in an admirable speech, used these words:—"If indeed we wish to know a nation, it is peculiarly desirable to possess an independent and extensive familiarity with its language; and this must be an object more than desirable, it must be *indispensable*, when in the bosom of that nation we are charged with the execution of the most serious and solemn offices of human life." India is regarded here as a *part* of the British empire; but shall such sentiments be held as sterling at the distance of half the globe, and be *despised* within the bosom of the mother-country?

any thing at all formidable in acquiring this language : quite the reverse. Men of weak and feeble patriotism have magnified this separating wall, as the children of Israel did the walled towns of the sons of Anak ; but all such fancies might be answered by an English monosyllable of only three letters —TRY. Believe not that the barrier is so very formidable ; even by a little assiduity you may leap over it, and then a welcome indeed awaits you at every step, not only from this ancient people, but in the language itself,—a *parent* language, which, on this account, it should be remembered, enjoys certain advantages, calculated at once to interest the mind, and urge the student forward. I might refer for illustration to that delightful feature in many of the words, which may be styled, *self-interpretation*,—a feature which has already been beautifully illustrated in several of the replies given by Irish youths, when reading the Scriptures in their native tongue. A language containing all its roots in itself, receiving its modifications from within, and conveying ideas therefore with point and precision, must needs be interesting and valuable as a vehicle for intelligent and serious discourse ; and thus it certainly presents one peculiar advantage for proclaiming the truth, which may encourage you to commence learning to-morrow, if not to-day. I remember well receiving a letter from a Highland minister some years ago which will explain this advantage. “While the Gaelic,” said he, “continues to be generally spoken in the Highlands, it must always be the language best adapted for conveying religious instruction to the people. In Lowland parishes, where English alone is spoken and preached, it may be fairly presumed, that some of the auditors, though they speak no other tongue, do not understand the whole of the language they hear delivered from the pulpit : but it is one of the peculiarities of the Gaelic, *that the illiterate speak it with as much propriety as those who have received the advantage of education ; and that, as far as regards language merely, the common herd will understand the best orator.*”

Thus it is precisely among the Native Irish ; so that *you may rest assured*, in the language itself once begun

there must be some of its features which will interest your own mind. Much of needless ridicule has been cast upon Irish antiquities, although the tongue being confessedly ancient, the people must be so too; but still there can be nothing of imposture in the language itself. De Rentsi or Vallancey from abroad, or Halliday and O'Reilly at home, but all grown up to manhood before they knew a word of it, could not become so enthusiastically fond of the language for nothing, or by mistake.* There must therefore be in it that which, independently of the duty imposed, is interesting to the student. But although there were not, you have read the account of Brainerd preaching to his Indians; or if not, you have seen Bedell, in the sixtieth year of his age, sit down, two hundred years ago, and acquire the Irish language, and you have read that this "was soon observed to be regarded by the natives in the light of a great compliment." No, a kind compliment was not thrown away upon the Irish then; and though you live among the *seventh* generation since he set this example, the Native Irish, especially as it regards the language, you will soon find to be of the same blood with the contemporaries of Bedell. For whether it be that kind compliments to them have been, like angel visits, few and far between, it is but seldom that one is thrown away on most of them.

A stated intelligible Ministry.

Waving, however, all minor considerations, if you are ever to be the blessed instrument of saving many around you, it is certain that, as to acquiring this language, "necessity is laid upon you." To reach the heart through the ear by any other medium, is out of the question. Man, it is true, has been described as "a divider of the voice," or,

* What should we have thought if our language had possessed such enticing allurements, as that several of our earlier and later elementary books, our grammars or dictionaries, should have been composed by foreigners who had come into the country, or by persons living in it, who had grown up before they could read or speak a word of it. Such is the fact with regard to the Irish language. Sir Matthew De Rentsi, General Vallancey, William Halliday, and Edward O'Reilly, are here referred to in proof. See "The Historical Sketches," 2d edition, p. 296.

in other words, an utterer of articulate sounds ; but in order to clear his way he must accommodate himself to the articulate sounds which have preceded his approach to any given spot. Let these sounds have been what they may, his own form of communication will not suffice. In every instance, spoken language takes precedence of all other means, and hence, in improving the condition of any class of men, we propose *first* to talk with them, then teach them. So it ought to have been all along, and certainly at least two hundred and fifty or three hundred years ago with the Native Irish ; and whatever any may say to the contrary, so it must be now in the nineteenth century.

But there is here another consideration of no inferior kind. If spoken language is first in the order of time, it *continues* to be first in point of importance. The noble invention of printing is powerless here, to move it from its ancient and unchanging pre-eminence. The power of the *press*, great as it is, is here at least far below the power of the *tongue* : for, independently of the natural power of the living voice, he who made "man's mouth" hath so ordained it. The volume of revelation itself indeed has been printed, but what then ? After all, in every instance, he who regards it not as vocal, can never know its meaning—never feel its power. It began in audible sounds by the Creator himself to the parents of mankind—the rest he inspired, and holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. The volume hath closed, and the original mode of communication hath ceased, all truth having been uttered which was needful for any age or people. But the communication itself remains, and revelation still is literally and truly a voice—clear and expressive—it is the voice of God—

Thus Scripture, unsophisticate by man,
Starts not aside from the Creator's plan ;
The melody, that was of old design'd
To cheer the first forefathers of mankind,
Is note for note deliver'd in our ears,
In the last scene of these six thousand years.

But still, even while revelation was in the course of delivery, *intelligible* speech respecting it was not dispensed with.

Inspired men were but occasional teachers, and there were long spaces wherein no prophet appeared. Nay, even in the time when prophecy flourished, the standing ministry were not prophets, and we may see the very prophets send the people for instruction to the "Levite and the teaching priest," or reprove both for neglect.*

So also, while Revelation was in the course of delivery, there might be, and there were decays. "For a long season Israel had been without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without the law," and thirty years more passed away before it was otherwise. But in the third year of Jehoshaphat "he sent to his princes to teach in the cities of Judah," and with them he sent Levites and teaching priests, "and they had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and they went about throughout all the cities of Judah and taught the people." The consequence immediately recorded is striking: "And the fear of the Lord was upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, and they made no war against Jehoshaphat." Nay then the Philistines brought him presents of silver, and even Arabia brought of her flocks to the amount of thousands.† Such a course for a king may now seem to be of small account; yet such was Jehoshaphat's way of securing both the peace and the prosperity of his subjects.

And if it were so in these early days, under the new covenant there was no change, even although the opposition to Christianity as *spoken* has always been by far the greatest—a valuable testimony, by the way, to the power of language as an instrument of usefulness.

The Founder of our faith suffered in consequence of his words, and his good confession before Pontius Pilate, yet did he not change his determination as to this precise mode of advancing his cause. The confusion of tongues had dispersed mankind—the gift of tongues was intended to gather into his sheepfold; and his followers replied—"We cannot but *speak* the things which we have seen and heard."

* Haggai, ii. 11; Malachi, ii. 6, 7; Jeremiah, viii. 22.

† See 2 Chron. xv. 3. xvi. 7-11.

—"Woe is unto me," said another, "if I *preach not* the Gospel!"

Yet, gifted as these men confessedly were, what was their very highest aim upon earth? Intelligible discourse. No men were ever so impressed with the importance of *intelligible* preaching. Understanding well the true ground of action in religion—that the connected sense of Scripture is the only true sense, correct testimony the only ground of faith, and fair argument the only ground of upright action, preaching from their mouths became "serious discourse indeed." Sound, mere sound, in their estimation, was nothing: intelligibility, wherever they went, was their aim. Debtors to the Greek and to the barbarian, to the wise and the unwise, no sooner did they step across the boundary of any one tongue, than they took up the vernacular idiom of the spot on which they stood. They might indeed have to preach in one language to-day, and in another to-morrow, and this miracle from on high remains upon record, like a pointing finger to the path which Heaven would approve, when man was to be left to pursue his course with the graces that remain—Faith, and Hope, and Charity.

Nor was this all—even on the spot where these men stood, intelligibility in that language was still their aim. Language, let it be which it might, pleased them not, if it affected only the ear. If a man "uttered by the tongue words easy to be understood," he met their approbation; if he did not, they called it "speaking to the air." But old Sedulius, the Irishman, they would have esteemed, when he said, perhaps above a thousand years ago—"Be not children in understanding, but ye ought to know *wherefore* languages were given. Better to speak a few lucid words in the right sense, than innumerable that are obscure and unknown."

After all this, it was at once an amiable and important as well as an exemplary feature in these, the original preachers of Christianity, that they had frequently as much anxiety respecting the frame of their own spirits in preaching, as they had respecting the hearts of their auditors in hearing. Their own temper of mind they certainly ranked among the

subordinate and ordained requisites of success. In the most painful and perilous circumstances, "approving themselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness and love unfeigned."—"We also believe," said they, "and *therefore* speak." Eloquence, or even being "mighty in the Scriptures," without love, was in their ear but a tinkling sound. Such was at least *their* regard both to matter and manner—to the letter of their discourse and their dispositions in delivery. To some, their example may seem too high for imitation, but it has been drawn out and left on record assuredly with this intent; for while these are to be our patterns and guides, they are the only human guides whom it is safe in such a course to follow.

Is it at all unwarrantable to regard the first propagators of Christianity? Are their principles and procedure not to be followed? or is it forbidden to apply such examples to the present state of Ireland? How then would these men have acted there? Would *they* have waited and seen the people die around them, without attempting to acquire their vernacular tongue? Would *they* have waited till it should be the unwise and vain policy of some human power to attempt bringing it into disuse? Would they not rather have styled every other language "barbarous," except the one spoken on the *spot*?* Would they not have seized upon this as the only adequate and speedy medium of reaching the mind? as the only way of reaching the heart through the ear? Certainly they would; and any minister of the truth now in Ireland, who shall sit down in good earnest to acquire this lively and expressive medium of communication, with a view to his proclaiming in it the message of salvation, the unsearchable riches of Christ, is following the example of those who, of all other men, most closely followed their Lord, and best understood the terms of his commission.

* 1 Cor. xiv. 10, 11. There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them without signification; therefore, if I know not the meaning of the voice, *I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh a barbarian unto me.*

Independently, however, of the force and peculiar attraction of such examples, which we have no doubt were intended, not only to be admired but followed, the very *frame and structure, the forms of expression and the disposition of the parts of Divine Revelation*, prove that oral instruction was intended to *accompany* it.

The Sacred Volume complete, in the Irish language and character, has left the press. It is an era which may well be accompanied with thanksgiving to God, and I rejoice the more in that it has been printed on Irish ground: but then this is at the same time an event which involves other obligations, and seems to call for reflection upon them.

When the Mohammedan imposture arose, there was no success for the Koran till its author laid his sword across it, and proclaimed the prospect of sensual blessedness. He told his followers, that the system he came to settle must be propagated by the sword, and not by the word, and that all who would not receive it must be exterminated. The hope of plunder in this world, and a voluptuous paradise in the next, account for his success. What a contrast to all this do the Sacred Writings, when considered simply as a *volume*, present!—in which large portions stand out before us as among the effects of faith, not the original *cause* of belief, either in the writer or in those to whom he addressed himself.*

And now that all truth is spoken, and the volume finished, let us observe its contents. The doctrines to be believed, and the supernatural truths to be received, are unfolded to the mind, not in regular series, not in what men call systematic order, not in any way analogous to arithmetical progression. They are not disposed into common-place, nor arranged at all in the manner which we usually style methodical. And yet, taking the volume as a whole, on searching it, there is no disposition of language to be found, making the most distant approach to method so exquisite, in which there is such constant mutual respect of one part to another, and such vital dependence of one truth upon

* e. g. Luke i. 1-4; 2 Peter, i. 1.

all the rest. Prophecies and historical writing, prayers, and songs, and epistolary correspondence are intermingled : yet in all this, and precisely as it stands, there is a designed and harmonious connexion, and that so perfect, that much of the obscurity of which some complain must arise either from ignorance of the truths referred to, or from hostility to them. So very important is this peculiarity of the Scriptures, that the best criterion of a good system is simply its agreement with them. "That view of things, whether we have any of us fully attained it or not, which admits the most natural meaning to be put upon every part of God's word, is the right system of religious truth. After this, to be without system is nearly the same thing as to be without principle. Whatever principles we may have, while they continue in this disorganized state, they will answer but little purpose in the religious life. Like a tumultuous assembly in the day of battle, they may exist, but it will be without order, energy, or end."*

Thus it appears that the disposition of the several parts, with the whole form of expression in Sacred Writ, is calculated, and therefore was intended, not to make men expert in notions, or subtile in dispute, but wise unto salvation : and it is also a fine testimony to this form of Divine Revelation, coming to the church as its occasions required, and now as a whole laid before us, that no part of this book was ever wrested, save by the unteachable and the unstable ; and that its doctrines and precepts have never been rejected, except by those who walked, and were determined to walk, after their own lusts. Even Lord Rochester, after a life thus spent, must leave this testimony behind him. Laying his hand on the Bible, he would say, "There is true philosophy. This is the wisdom that speaks to the heart. A bad life is the only grand objection to this book."

Such being the methods of Him who is infinite in wisdom—such the very structure of the volume wherein his voice is heard, the business of a public expositor is of course not to disturb, but to point out this harmony. One great

* Fuller.

use of such an expositor is, that the people may hear a man who is himself a believer, not only comparing spiritual things with spiritual, and rightly dividing the word of truth, but at other times expressing his profound reverence for truths which are too mighty for his grasp—or see him fixed in admiration over the depths of sacred discoveries. Hence it is, that more positive good has accrued to men from pausing over the expressions of such a man as Paul, even when lost in wonder at the riches of Infinite Wisdom, than from all the dogmatism in the world.*

Yes, among all the other ends of Infinite Wisdom, to which this disposition of the various parts of Divine revelation is subservient, one of the most important is that of rendering *useful* and *necessary* the great ordinance of the ministry. "God hath not designed to instruct and save his church by any one outward ordinance only. The ways and means of doing good unto us, so as that all may issue in his own eternal glory, are known only unto Infinite Wisdom. The institution of the whole series and complex of divine ordinances is no otherwise to be accounted for but by a regard and submission thereto. Who can deny that God might both have instructed, sanctified, and saved us, without the use of some or all of those institutions to which he hath obliged us? His infinitely-wise will is the only reason of these things; and he will have every one of his appointments on which he hath put his name to be honoured—such is the ministry. A means this, which is not co-ordinate with the Scripture, but subservient to it; and the great end of it is, that those who are called thereto, and are furnished with gifts for the discharge of it, might diligently *search* the Scriptures, and teach others the mind of God therein revealed. It was, I say, the will of God that the church should ordinarily be always under the conduct of such a ministry; and his will it is, that those who are called thereto should be furnished with peculiar spiritual gifts, for the finding-out and declaration of the truths that are treasured up in the Scripture, unto all the ends of Divine

* Romans, xi. 33; Ephes. iii. 8-19, 20, 21.

revelation.* The Scripture, therefore, is such a revelation as doth suppose and *make necessary* this ordinance of the ministry, wherein and whereby God will be glorified; and it were well if the nature and duties of this office were better understood than they seem to be. God hath accommodated the revelation of himself in the Scripture with respect unto them; and those by whom the due discharge of this office is despised or neglected do sin greatly against the authority, and wisdom, and love of God; and those do no less by whom it is assumed, but not rightly understood, or not duly improved."†

Preaching from Place to Place.

Stationary instruction, generally delivered in a well-known, and on this account an endeared spot, is not the only mode held out to us in Scripture. Granting to it all the power of which it is susceptible, still there are certain districts in Ireland to which this can never reach. Look at these distant hills—these Irish mountains—these numerous islands—mourning in moral destitution, I need not say from Sabbath to Sabbath, but from age to age—from father to son. If every one of them might adopt the words of the man of Macedonia, *Come over and help us*, will no ear vibrate to the first monosyllable of the commission of Jesus?—*Go*.

And is there no precedent to encourage hope in such a case as this? In the eye of primitive Christianity the unlettered population, however distant or difficult of access, seemed even as a part of the land of promise. The mere professor may sit still and talk only like the ten spies—the Christian will resemble Caleb and Joshua, and also ponder over the original triumph of Christianity. "This," he will say, "has been recorded for our learning." It formed indeed a striking contrast, in various respects, to the genius of the former dispensation. The Jewish economy was mercifully intended, it should seem, for the preservation of light,

* See Ephes. iv. 11-16. 2 Tim. iii. 14-17.

† Owen's Works, vol. iii. p. 459.

or to prevent its entire extinction in our world—the Messiah has it in view to banish darkness from the earth by the brightness of his coming. Many a man might indeed knock at the door of Judaism—be admitted, and, standing within the walls of Jerusalem, take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of Jehovah ; under the present dispensation this cup is to be “ handed round ” among all nations. “ Thou hast scattered us among the heathen,” was the complaint of old, and for the time being it was the death-blow to the administration of Judaism ; but that which was the death of the former will prove the life of the present dispensation ; so much so, that even the present scattering of this ancient people shall turn to Christianity for a testimony. “ And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people, as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass, which tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men.”

It is, however, not a little extraordinary, that an idea should have prevailed, and have even been acted on in this country, that men of very *inferior* qualifications are good enough for employment in such unlettered districts. The ancient method and order have been *reversed*, which supposed that the commencement, in such cases, demanded some one or two of strongest faith and largest grace. Were Israel to be led into Canaan ? Caleb and Joshua shall do this. Was the temple to be restored ? Were the walls to be rebuilt ? an eye is fixed on Ezra, and Zerubbabel, and Nehemiah. When the land of Judea was visited by the Sun of Righteousness, while it was traversed in every direction, Galilee was the chosen spot : and the people who sat in darkness saw that great light—upon the men sitting in the region of the shadow of death that light arose. The word which we preach, “ *first* began to be spoken by the Lord.” When even the twelve were addressed by their Lord, he said, “ Other men have laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.” The twelve preceded the seventy, and both these the evangelists, and so all this ended in stationary and stated instruction.

Besides, when contemplating districts like these in Ire-

land, wherever they are to be found, it should seem but the dictate of wisdom, that the people lowest sunk or longest neglected, imperatively demand the men of largest grace and richest talent, the men of greatest zeal and wisest address. To minister to such, I am aware, has seemed, in the eye of the world, to be a mean employment—but mean is the man who thinks it mean. So thought not that “Minister for the truth of God,” who from his throne in the skies descended “to confirm the promises made unto the fathers, and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy.” No class indeed did he overlook or disdain; to every one there was service rendered in due season: yet did it appear to him one of the peculiar glories of his rising kingdom, that to the *poor* the Gospel was preached. Constituting, as they ever have done, the great mass, among them he spent his strength—among them he found out his twelve apostles, and richer faith on the seacoast and borders than ever he met with in the capital of the country. So then, *He went about* doing good, nor could any consideration turn him from his course. It is true, that “the people sought him—and came to him—and stayed him, that he should not depart from them,—but he said to them, ‘I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also, for therefore am I sent.’ And he went about all Galilee, and his fame went throughout all Syria.”

Two and Two.

One peculiar feature of this ambulatory mode of instruction seems to have been in a great degree overlooked in our day. The fishermen of Galilee were not sent out in twelve different directions, nor the seventy in seventy others; they went in pairs, two and two, and the deeds of the disciples afterwards prove that they did not regard this as a mere circumstance. Hence Peter and John act jointly together among the Jews, and when going to the Samaritans they do the same. And as for the Gentiles—“Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them,” said the Holy Spirit. So also we read, not only of Paul

and Barnabas, but Paul and Silas—Barnabas and Mark—Paul and Timothy—Paul and Titus. “Whether any do inquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellow-helper concerning you; or our brethren be inquired of, they are the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ.”

Engaging though they did in this cause with their whole soul, even an apostle, when left alone, could not bear up occasionally in the absence of his companion. “When I came to Troas to preach Christ’s Gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but, taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia.” I am aware that the distress of Paul at this time arose from peculiar circumstances; but the moral effect of two such men, so attached to each other, travelling together, could not but be great, while it furnished themselves with some peculiar occasions for celebrating the condescension and the love of God. “I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation; for when we were come into Macedonia (still) our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears. Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us—by the coming of Titus.”

The mutual support and encouragement thus mercifully secured by such an arrangement, was not its only advantage or end. It is not difficult here to perceive the wisdom of the Divine eye fixed on the advancement and triumph of his cause among men. A solitary Christian minister going out, however eminent, can but exemplify one view of Christianity, while its social character is not within the compass of his power. But the kingdom of the Messiah among men is a system of *social* love, and peace, and joy; and two men, whose souls are knit together like David and Jonathan, or Peter and John, or Paul and Titus, afford every where a perpetual commentary on this kingdom. Their very behaviour to each other is remarked and remembered. Their mutual love, grounded on mutual esteem,—their Christian courtesy,—their mutual hope, and their happiness in one *common object*, are sure to win regard,—their unity in doc-

trine, like chain-shot, is sure to have greater effect; and, before bidding adieu to any spot,—“As God is true,” may they say, “our preaching toward you was not yea and nay.”—“For the Son of God,” said Paul, “Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea.”

In this cause especially, it should seem that “two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labour.” Who can take it upon him to say how much of success may be suspended upon attention to this simple circumstance in the mode of procedure? God our Saviour is the blessed and the only Potentate over his own kingdom; and in his way and manner of promoting his own glory upon earth, He must be permitted to reign, unquestioned and alone. But never is he more condescendingly gracious than when we meet him in his own ways. I leave the reader to judge, whether, when he rode forth triumphantly, conquering and to conquer, he did not sanction this mode. Whether he did not begin it himself in the days of his flesh, and pursue it, by his Spirit, after that he ceased to be visible.

Indeed, I am not aware of any important objection that has ever been started to such a course. True, we have heard something to this effect:—“Be assured, that only one we should be happy to find, and endowed with the qualifications which seem to be essentially requisite: even this is difficult; but where are such numbers to be found as sending two at once implies?” To this I answer,—Numbers are not essential,—numbers may spoil all: two at any time will suffice. “But then it is *such* two.” Ah! now you have struck the mark. Yes, and among ten that might offer, it is very possible that a pair is not to be found. It is not two individuals who are able to talk, or even to teach only: it is love and Christian friendship which are wanted. He, with whom remains all hope of ultimate success, is not seeking for numbers only. It is two brethren, whose voices shall symphonize, because their hearts are one. Two, to whom he has said,—“If two of you shall agree* upon earth, as

* Συμφωνησωσιν. Of different voices to form one symphony,—to agree by consent. Matt. 18, 19.

touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them by my Father, which is in heaven." Two, to whom he may say, on going out,—“The harvest is great, but the labourers are few ; pray YE the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into his harvest.”

Or the Individual Minister of Christ.

Surely no considerate reader will ever suppose that there is one word said here which should for a moment discourage any *one* servant of God, much less prevent him from going out by himself ; nor can there be in an idea, which seems, without violence, to be deducible from many parts of the Divine word, a single consideration which should depress him, when going out alone. In an age wherein the *secret* of primitive success seems to be lost, is it strange that we should search about in all directions till we find it ? And could we find it, we should then perhaps see that *both* methods being employed, the other, of course, *never* followed, save when this fine harmony of spirit,—this sweet interweaving of interests,—this abnegation of self, was both felt and seen. Among a set of men, who, as *individuals*, had so devoted themselves,—so yielded themselves unto God, and their members as instruments of righteousness unto him, nothing was more natural than that peculiar friendships should be formed, and that a number of individuals should as it were *pair* off. At the same time, the unintentional—the almost imperceptible occasion which gave rise to it would often afterwards excite both wonder and gratitude in their own minds.

Mysterious are His ways, whose power
Brings on that unexpected hour,
When minds that never met before
Shall meet—unite—and part no more.
A transient visit intervening,
And made almost without a meaning ;
Hardly the effect of inclination,
Much less of pleasing expectation,
Produced a friendship, then begun,
That had cemented them in one.

But in the mean while the idea thus thrown out does in

no respect whatever militate against many another Divine assurance. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall *doubtless* come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." The history of the first Church that was gathered after the Saviour's ascension, may at once instruct and encourage us here. Why should a Church so harmonious and so distinguished as an exhibition of the Saviour's design, be at all disturbed? Why? Had He qualified men for the ministry merely to congregate in one place? Certainly not. And yet were they going to sit down, though in perfect harmony, and forget his last command? So it should seem. Hitherto, as the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord had been round about them; but providence and grace must now unite to teach them the meaning of his high commission. The Apostles excepted, therefore, for a season, all the preachers were then literally scattered abroad. Here was *providence*. But the *hand* of the Lord was with them, and as they every where preached the word, "a great number believed and turned unto the Lord." So here was *grace*; and never let it be forgotten that it was this very *scattering*, which gave rise to that "worthy name" by which millions have since been called. For the disciples were called *Christians* first at Antioch. In short, the promise of the Saviour is to his servants individually, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." And surely this is all-sufficient encouragement. The Head of the Church goes with the humblest messenger!

Gaelic Ministers.

In addition to those ministers of Christ resident in Ireland, and daily surrounded by the Irish tongue, there is another class of our countrymen on this side of the Channel, and to certain gifted individuals of this class, one should suppose that the existing state of the Native Irish must become a subject of thoughtful consideration. I refer to those who speak *Gaelic*. The reader has seen that at one period there were several Gaelic congregations in Ireland, and that, summoned as by the sound of an Irish harp, the Irish attended. The business between the Hebrides and the Gal-

way coast has been transacted for years through this medium, common to both parties. The experiment of a Highland minister being intelligible has been tried again and again with success. One of these, when on a visit in 1827, had, I believe, as many as two thousand hearers at one time.

These descendants of the Native Irish are, in a peculiar sense, your brethren; and if the soul is to be considered as the standard of the man, you may well be pleased with this alliance. You will suppose that I am in some degree aware of the connexion existing between Ireland and the Gael of Scotland,—that it was once rather a delicate subject of reference with some, and the matter of needless controversy with others. But the days of petty jealousy may well pass away, for there is nothing left now which need create dissension. Already the writer has had some opportunities of evincing his interest in our Highlands and Islands, and in all such cases as the present, when the Gael of Ireland and Scotland are brought into contact, it has seemed to him to be time, and more than time, for us to remember the words of good Archbishop Ussher,—“It is known to the learned that the name of *Scoti* in those elder times was common to the inhabitants of the greater and the lesser Scotland; I will not follow the example of those that have laboured to make dissension between the mother and daughter, but account them both *as of the same people*.”

Individuals, therefore, to whom the Gaelic language is familiar, who are qualified in other respects, and in whose hearts it is to do somewhat for the advancement of the Divine glory upon earth, would seem to be here specially addressed. After all that you have read, surely, *you* require no Native Irishman to appear in vision, and cry, “*Thig thairis gu Erinn, agus cuidich leinne*.” May you not assuredly gather that there is a call here to go and preach the Gospel? Were he to say—“*Tarr go Erinn, agus tabhair cabhair dhuinne*,”—could you not understand him? Yes, in one short month, or perhaps less, you would be sufficiently intelligible in many districts. Your brethren, too, the descendants of the Albanian Gaels, are there. You may have

observed the period when a number of your countrymen left the Hebrides and Highlands for Ireland. How many I cannot ascertain, but they must be their grandchildren and great grandchildren who now live in Ireland. Is there to be no such thing then as kindly going to see how they do—on the mountains of Donegal or the seacoast of Antrim? As an encouragement to proceed farther, if you will, one of your own ministers was intelligible even far down in the south. You are aware who it is that hath said, “As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.” How worthy of the best and most powerful talents, and the warmest heart, would be such an employment! *His* special presence and aid would not be denied, who hath said so much, in such tender terms, about searching for souls when they are scattered abroad; and who, in his word, laments so deeply when no shepherd can be found, conscientiously, and carefully, and wisely to do so.

To the taste of some this mode of procedure may seem discouraging, and the whole manner of the thing may not please. It is now forty years since Melvill Horne put the following words into the mouth of an objector, in the shape of an apostrophe to the Lord of the harvest himself:—“If thou wilt force us to cultivate this unpromising field, do not think of sending out immediately, but let lay *schoolmasters* go to receive the first fire, and teach the little children reading and writing; and then will we go and enter into their labours: for the experience of ages has taught us, that where preaching of the Gospel makes one Christian, education makes ten. Hence, instead of preaching first to the parents, and *then* establishing schools for the education of the children, as the apostles did (who knew that the sword of the Spirit was of heavenly temper,—an instrument into which the God of glory had wrought all his attributes, we, having lost the art of using it, and that arm which gives it the demonstration of the spirit and of power), we go to work another way, by educating children first; and many are of opi-

nion, that the best way of enlightening is by putting the moon in the sun's sphere, and having children to instruct their parents, rather than parents to teach their children !”

Others there may be who seem most warmly to approve for a season, and yet fail of success. They are to go to work in good earnest, but the number referred to, even to begin with, is as nothing to them. They in truth look to quantity in most things, not quality—to numbers more than qualifications. At all events, every thing must be undertaken upon what they are pleased to call a grand scale, or no good, say they, can come out of it ; and it is not worthy of their pains even to commence in any other manner. But still “ God’s ways are not our ways, neither are his thoughts our thoughts,”—though never is there such a contrast to both, as when some men set about what they conceive must be done before success can follow, or be even expected. Noise, bustle, publicity, as it were the blowing of a trumpet, must be heard, and all before any thing be done, or perhaps be attempted ; but the kingdom of God never did, and will not now, so come. Thoughtfulness and retirement,—a heart deeply impressed, and secret supplication to Him who is even now crowned with glory and honour, although we see not yet all things put under him, are suitable preparations. Consciousness of unworthiness to be employed, and consciousness of weakness when once engaged,—these, these are dispositions which were never felt in vain—and never yet ended in nothing being accomplished.

In taking leave of this important subject, and looking over Ireland as now described, it is unquestionably a most momentous consideration that the commission of God our Saviour has been so long and awfully disregarded ; and, to speak calmly, this certainly ought to become the subject of national feeling on the part of Christians throughout the kingdom.

TO
OUR COUNTRYMEN AND FELLOW-SUBJECTS,
THE NATIVE IRISH.

WHILE it is desirable that your fellow-subjects should befriend you, and certainly incumbent on them so to do, I cannot conclude without returning to you yourselves, with a view to whose benefit every line has been written. I have not disguised, or rather have been incapable of disguising, that I feel a peculiar interest in every thing relating to your present circumstances, and have only to lament its not having been in my power to discover it in some more substantial form; while at the same time I can never forget the warm and grateful language which has been so repeatedly conveyed to me, in reference to a slight Memorial on your behalf, published about twenty years ago.

And since the disclosure of your past history and present state in the Historical Sketches, how many have felt for you and longed for a brighter day, I cannot tell. With that volume I believe not a few among you are quite familiar, but it must be gratifying for you to know, that in consequence of it, one and another have actually acquired the Irish language, in order, if possible, to be of some service to the people,—an example which will, I trust, be followed by not a few. Deep interest has been felt by others, and expressed both by voice and by letters. Were you to ask for a specimen, I might give the following, in which you will find sympathy for the present, followed by hope for the future :—

Erin mavournein ! oh, when wilt thou rise
 From the slumber of death which has bound thee ?
 Is the mist of delusion cast o'er thine eyes ?
 Are thy children weeping around thee ?
 Harp of sweet Innisfail ! mute are thy chords,
 Silent thy deep-flowing numbers,
 And strangers, too listless, have long been thy lords,
 And weeds have crept over thy slumbers.

Erin mavournein ! the day-star shall shine,
 To soften thy night into morning ;
 Again shalt thou sparkle in radiance divine,
 The land with thy beauty adorning :
 Harp of sweet Innisfail ! thou shalt awake
 By the side of a life-giving fountain :
 Again shall thy rich peal of melody break
 To gladden each valley and mountain.

Erin mavournein ! the bosoms that mourn
 At last shall with rapture behold thee :
 The Lord who averted his face shall return,
 And the blaze of his presence enfold thee.
 Glory of Innisfail ! Spirit of Song !
 To thee shall the triumph be given,
 To roll the full tones of thy harpings along,
 And swell the devotions of Heaven !*

In short, the interest which is felt in you, will, I believe, now never die away, as it has, alas ! too often done before. But still it is to yourselves that I cannot help looking. Yes, for from among yourselves I entertain no doubt, that more than one man will yet arise, who in his own expressive Irish, with great ability, both spiritual and natural, will extol the stem of Jesse's rod—will *testify* repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ—will hold forth the wonders of the cross—the glory of God in the face of his beloved Son, the only Mediator—the all-sufficiency of his atoning death—the power and prevalence of his unceasing intercession.

Yes, the days are at last come, I trust, when you will find many a kind and intelligent friend cordially willing to help you on your way, whether it regards the possession of

* Written just after reading the Historical Sketches of the Native Irish, second edition. The change of two words and transposition of two monosyllables, the Authoress will not disapprove.

books, or the benefits of education. But whether this be the case or not, these are but *subsidiary* things; and to yourselves as men I now rather turn,—and to yourselves, ultimately at least, I look for a better day.

In most parts of this kingdom we have, and have long enjoyed, benefits such as these. Books and schools we have in abundance; but it by no means follows as a necessary consequence in these parts, though Christianity be professed, that the people are in possession of her purifying faith, her animating prospects, or that love which is the balm of the soul, and the last end of God in all that he bestows. No; in many a district you might see, that, without the living voice—without the language of the heart addressed to the conscience—all around is cold, and withering into the grave. And why is this? Simply because there is One above who hath not revoked his own commission—“Go into *all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.*”—“Go, teach all nations.” Without obedience to these words, no country can enjoy substantial gladness, nor any land yield that return of gratitude and praise for which he created it; and so it must be with the country in which you dwell: but this commission once obeyed, the solitary place itself will be glad, the moral desert will rejoice and blossom as the rose.

With most of the discouragements which you might immediately bring forward the writer is not unacquainted; but then it is not wise to look upon a country, and think only of what it ought to be, or might have been, by this time. No; it is the part of wisdom to take it up just as it is; and, upon calm reflection, discouraging in many respects though the prospect be, there is no condition into which a people can be plunged, in which there may not be descried some circumstances favourable to the design of enlightening the mind and saving it from ultimate ruin; and who can tell but that in your present situation there may be found some things favourable, and which almost seem to say, that the Messiah himself is on his way to bless you? At all events, let us rather search for encouragements, however small, or of whatever kind.

After all that can be said of the worst parts of Ireland,

we cannot say that they are overrun with pernicious and debasing publications in the *Irish language*, as some other parts of the kingdom have been with such things in English. Now, this is a circumstance favourable to every measure here recommended.

Even with regard to poverty, let us look into this, since it cannot be removed but by degrees. Nay, let us look into it before it be removed, and see whether in the mean while any good can be done to the people. In his own estimation, the rich man's wealth is his strong city, and in many instances the destruction of the poor is their poverty. Thus, many who are poor seem to imagine that their mere poverty excuses them from almost all obligation. But if riches profit not in the day of wrath, neither will poverty; yet even in the state of poverty, as such, there may be some encouragements for us to hope for a better day. From the rest of the community, it is true, the people seem almost as if they had been cut off; and so the state has been described by the French word—*degagé*, disengaged. But though poverty in many respects may detach that part of a community from the rest, still when religious truth is considered, thus disengaged they are often nearest of all others to free inquiry. The senses of seeing and hearing are the same with those of their superiors, and their faculties of observing and reflecting often less sophisticated.

Some men, and benevolent men too, talk as if all the evils that afflict a community were summed up in one word—*ignorance*, and they see no ground on which to fix the anchor of their hope, save an increase of *knowledge*; but this is, at the best, but a very superficial view of human nature at large, or of any one community upon earth. The cause of confusion or discord, misery and distress, has its root in the *dispositions of the heart*; and although knowledge unquestionably produces both peace and power, no radical cure can be effected till the dispositions are changed. For example, "What is the source of contentions in common life? Observe the discords in neighbourhoods and families, which, notwithstanding all the restraints of *relationship, interest, honour, law, and reason*, are a fire that

never ceases to burn, and which, were they no more controlled by the laws than independent nations are by each other, would, in thousands of instances, break forth into assassinations and murders. From whence spring these wars? Are they the result of *ignorance*? If so, they would chiefly be confined to the rude or uninformed part of the community. But is it so? There may, it is true, be more pretences to peace and good-will, and fewer bursts of open resentment in the higher than the lower orders of people, but their dispositions are much the same. The laws of politeness can only polish the surface, and there are some parts of the human character which still appear very rough. Even politeness has its regulations for strife and murder, and establishes iniquity by a law. The evil disposition is a kind of subterraneous fire, and in some form it will have vent."

But make the case, if you will, more deplorable, and even to poverty add affliction, in any or in all of its forms, is there not a remedy which may be conveyed and applied as effectually to the poor as to the rich,—to those who have been long neglected as to those who have been long supplied? "Whether Christianity," says the author just quoted, "whether Christianity or the want of it be best adapted to relieve the heart under its various pressures, let those testify who have been in the habit of visiting the afflicted poor. In this situation, characters of very opposite descriptions are found. Some are serious and sincere Christians; others, even among those who have attended the preaching of the Gospel, appear neither to understand nor feel it. The tale of woe is told, perhaps, by both; but the one is unaccompanied with that discontent, that wretchedness of mind, and that inclination to despair, which is manifest in the other. Often have I seen the cheerful smile of contentment under circumstances the most abject and afflictive. Amidst tears of sorrow, which a full heart has rendered it impossible to suppress, a mixture of hope and joy has glistened. 'The cup that my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?' Such have been their feelings, and such their expressions; and where this has been the case, death has generally been embraced as the messenger

of peace. 'Here,' I have said, participating in their sensations, 'is the patience and the faith of the saints. Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?'**

Not altogether satisfied, perhaps you still reply,—“But our people, in many districts, are sunk and destitute to a degree of which thousands in Britain can form scarcely any conception.” All this the writer knows. He has seen this again and again, and in places more numerous than even thousands who live in Ireland itself have ever seen; and often since has the heart bled over it;—nay, he may truly add, it does so now. But still, to his mind, all this would rather incite to such exertions. Kindness and liberality, attention to the poor, and employment of those who are able to work, are moral and Christian duties, incumbent on every one to the extent of his means; yet, after all this is done, nay, before it be, there are blessings which the heart and tongue of man are able to convey to the heart and home of others, however sunk, which money is too poor to purchase, and which its most ample supply cannot procure. Hearing the glad tidings of salvation from his lips, and receiving the Book of Life from his hands, the poorest of the poor have felt that they were exalted, and even in the depth of affliction have been heard to say—“I will sing of judgment and of mercy, unto thee O Lord will I sing.” Do you know that one of your own Countrymen, himself, I believe, in humble circumstances, has taken up this theme? and for these twenty years often have I admired his lines. Take them, and sing them if you will, to the ancient Irish music of “Savourneen Dhelish.”

Tho' the morning of life should be gloomy and clouded,

The noon-tide in storms and tempests should rave,

The ev'ning in darkness, thick darkness, be shrouded,

And close, late and low'ring, in the night of the grave:

Yet the faithful undaunted, with hope strong and cheering,

Proceeds through the dark vale, nor doubting nor fearing,

With transport he looks to the joyful appearing

Of Him, who came lowly, to seek and to save.

Tho' the world in the depth of affliction should leave us,
 And those we relied on, stand aloof in our wo ;
 Tho' foes should combine, whilst false friends deceive us,
 And darken the cloud that surrounds us below ;
 Yet the day-star shall rise on the gloom of our sorrow,
 Wo reigns to-night here, but joy comes to-morrow,
 From the Fountain of Life we may comfort still borrow,
 Which earth and her princes could never bestow.

Yes, there is ONE who knows more of the state of any land, and sees far more deeply into its miseries, than any who reside in it and look upon it daily ; the stability and glory of whose government consists in *the tenderest regard to the poor and destitute*. When he was upon earth, it seemed to Himself a feature of his own life and times worthy of special notice, that to the *poor* the Gospel was preached, and He is still the same. "He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy." And more than this, they are not the last in any nation upon whom he casts the eye of his benignity,—far from it. At what time "all kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall serve him," one moving cause is immediately assigned, which applies to the point in hand ;—"for he shall deliver the needy when he crieth ; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and save the souls of the needy. He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence, and precious shall their blood be in his sight." Just as if to Him alone were left those parts of an empire which had gone far beyond the feeble humanity of man, or had long baffled all the expedients of the political economist. Now, these are the assertions of Infinite Wisdom ; and all this is said without one word about silver or gold. As the effect of such a glorious change, indeed, whether on a great scale or a small, whatever money is needed will not be withheld. "And he shall live," it is immediately added, "and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba : prayer, also, shall be made for him continually, and daily shall he be praised."

No : you may have heard much said in Ireland about collecting money for various purposes, and you might hear far more in Britain, and much said about it when collected :

but all this need not lead you to imagine for one moment that pecuniary means can ever hold any place in promoting this cause, except it be the last and the lowest. Never forget to think of Him, who, while he provided even a nest for the bird, "had not where to lay his head;" nor of the men he trained, who could say individually, "Silver and gold have I none,"—yet who ever did so much lasting good in the world as these men?

Now, there are those among you who fear God,—who love the Redeemer,—who enjoy the hope of life everlasting through his vicarious sufferings,—his atoning death and glorious resurrection. But does not the possession and enjoyment of these infinite blessings mark you out as debtors to your countrymen? "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." And ask not, "Who is my neighbour?" Ask not, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Rather go read the parable of the good Samaritan, and on this subject observe the great sorrow and continual heaviness of Paul, respecting *his* countrymen, or kinsmen, as he calls them, according to the flesh.

Let me then entreat, that you sit down and study the Sacred Record for yourself. Read, mark, and inwardly digest it. The advantages of deep reflection here are incalculable. Compare spiritual things with spiritual. Penetrate into the grand scheme of redemption through the unutterable sorrows of a Redeemer, who, though enthroned in glory, looks down upon you, observing how his commission is regarded by all who have received Him as their Lord and Master.

Every Christian man is certainly bound to communicate what he knows of Divine things, and he is expected to contribute in his measure to the light of the world; but think not that I imagine that every such man is called to become a preacher,—far from it. This you cannot suppose, after what you have read. If all were teachers where were the taught? Even in the days of our Saviour there were professed teachers *many*, and this there will always be, wherever emolument or honour from men is affixed to the mere *title*; but the labourers were *few*. Numbers he asks not,

and especially at first ; this never has been his manner ; but qualifications are indispensable, and they are literally *ALL in ALL*. From above these qualifications must descend, since the Messiah was exalted on high to bestow them. The foundation of the ministry is in the gift of Christ, the ground of all qualifications, that he hath bestowed them, and the employment of every talent, absolutely hinges upon the fact, that it has been *received*.*

This is a subject which it braces and encourages the mind to study, and which it is most animating so far to comprehend. The man himself, however richly endowed, or rather, I would say, the more he is so, dwells upon his own insignificance and his own insufficiency as positive truths ; and, discharged from the weariness and vanity of going forth in his own strength, he the better understands that the sword of the Spirit, when wielded by the arm of conscious weakness, is irresistible.

When such a man turns aside to contemplate any of those great recorded changes which have been or are to be effected only by Almighty Power, he discovers, about the period of their commencement especially, something which is at the

* Read Ephesians iv. 7-16, and then return to these words,—“ Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth ?” Descended, not only to assume humanity and a state of humiliation, but into the grave, as the end of it. Why does the sacred writer introduce this parenthesis ? Pause over it. Why thus mention here Christ's *descending* ? Was it to take advantage of a word ? Because, having mentioned his ascension, that he must notice also his descension ? No : this is not the way of the Spirit. There must be reason for mentioning it absolutely in this place and in this connexion ; and what could that be, if not with reference to the end in view ? In Christ's descending into the lower parts of the earth, as though he had said, there is that to be found which will at once account for this great gift of the Ministry, and contribute towards it in all succeeding generations.

The burial of Christ was the evident testimony of his actual death, and the Ministry grew out of this great event. Nothing has been more trifled with, it is true, nothing more abused, than the Ministry, nor any employment more lightly esteemed ; but there is, as it is now revealed, no question, that had the Saviour not died for it, there had been no such thing in existence, nor any such order of men ever known. In the Mediatorial Kingdom, die he did, and so *thus* and *then*, blessed be his name ! received gifts for men, yea for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might thus dwell among them. “ Thus it behoved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day—that repentance and remission of sins should be proclaimed, among all nations, in his name.”

utmost distance from extensive arrangements or formidable preparation,—something which to the eye of sense has often seemed inadequate if not weak, or vain if not foolish; but this to him is no ground either of surprise or despair. “The excellency of the power,” he says, “will thus appear to be of God.” Nor is it merely to the rise and progress of any little corner, to which he applies this “excellence in working” on the part of God, but to the whole field of operation, and to changes of the greatest magnitude. Such passages as the following are at once encouraging and familiar to his thoughts: “I will take you *one* of a city and *two* of a tribe, and I will bring you to Zion,”—after doing this, it follows, “And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding,”—and so “At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of Jehovah; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart.” Again, “Ye shall be gathered *one* by *one*, O ye children of Israel;” then after this it follows, “And it shall come to pass in that day that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship Jehovah in the holy mount at Jerusalem.”—“For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God,—for ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble call you,—but God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, that no flesh should glory in his presence.

Prophets, and Apostles, and Evangelists, are gone to their reward, it is true, and have left the earth,—but Christianity, as left by them, in its faithful yet tender announcements to the children of men, in its calls and invitations, is more than a match for sin, though it should have even gathered strength *and endurance* by long-practised habits. This is an en-

couraging view of Divine truth, as spoken in faith by a man who loves God, and therefore the souls of men. There is a blessing promised,—there is a power which will accompany such a voice, the effects of which it is not possible to calculate; falling as it will do, at times, like the small rain upon the tender grass, and in other cases ploughing up the ground of that heart which has lain long fallow. Or, in other words, finding its way into the mind of the unbeliever, and showing the man to himself, it is only with the view of introducing to Him who hath said, “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”

At all events, whoever shall engage in such employment as this, whether they be men to whom the Irish language is vernacular, or those who shall acquire it, both, we presume, will agree in saying, “The harvest is great, but the labourers are few;” and if so, perhaps we should do wrong to conclude, without expressing our admiration of the spirit which breathes through the words that immediately follow:—“Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.”

Before thus going out, the Saviour would not only enlarge their mind with respect to the greatness of the work before them, but guard them against the mean and selfish disposition of monopolizing the employment to themselves. Pray ye, that he would send forth more. Among different bodies of men, it has been observed, that there is a sad propensity to an ungenerous, if not a suspicious estimate of each other's exertions, while some will insidiously endeavour to divide those who are already united in a common cause. Joshua of old, generous and open as his natural disposition seems to have been, said to Moses, when referring to Eldad and Medad, “My Lord, Moses, forbid them.” But Moses instantly replied, “Enviest thou for my sake? Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that he would put his spirit upon them.” Some of the followers of the harbinger of Christ would seem to have indulged the same spirit, and thought to sow jealousy in his mind. “Rabbi,” said they, “he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom

thou bearest witness, behold the same baptizeth, and all men come to him." But did John encourage them in this insinuation? Far from it. "If it be so," as though he had said, "this is perfect joy to me."—"He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I decrease." Nay, even among the Apostles themselves, a spirit was displayed too much akin to that which the Saviour would banish for ever from our minds. "Master," said John, the mild and beloved John, "we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us." But Jesus answered, "Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us, is on our part. And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe on me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea."

The Redeemer, therefore, in thus addressing his servants before going out to labour for him, would prevent the indulgence of this unlovely and injurious disposition of mind. "Go," as though he had said, "the time of ingathering has come: property of all others the most valuable is about to be recovered to its lawful owner; but the harvest is great, and you have not the exclusive privilege of preaching my Gospel. Nay, to you yourselves I look for increase, both as it regards the harvest itself and hands to reap it. Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest. To see the general produce of a country run to waste would be affecting, and the more so from the labour previously bestowed. Let not souls be *thus* lost, and more especially since I send you forth to all the joys of ingathering, and upon my account. But the harvest is great, and my purpose is to employ others, who with you will enter into the joy of labour; others to whom the employment of body as well as mind will be a *delight*;—but these are not to be obtained on *my* part,

without prayer on *yours*." What a responsibility ! The Saviour once suspended the saving of a child from disease, on the faith of his parent, which made the man to cry out with tears of entreaty ; but here the harvest itself—the salvation of the multitude—is in view, yet the labourers are not to be sent forth on *his* part without prayer on theirs.*

In such a case as this of the Native Irish, some men would talk only of "looking about" for suitable instruments ; but the province of oral instruction is a sacred enclosure, where every movement essentially depends upon God, and this will not do. Look upwards we must, and if we

* But was this to be the concern, was this the duty of these men alone ? Never will there be more of success in the cause of God, until there is more of the " Spirit of supplication." Prayer must, in fact, be regarded as an essential part of the *labourer's* employ, nay of every Christian. Epaphras of Colosse well understood this.—Coloss. iv. 12. Here too the mind has ground to rest upon of a peculiar nature : for if the counsels of God are his highest affairs, and his own purposes are precious in his sight, these are expressed in promises, as so many grounds on which the suppliant is to rest, and as so many excitements to draw forth his desires. Besides, let it be remembered, that not one sincere desire has been, is now, or ever will be, in vain ! No, so far as the spirit of supplication in the heart has met with the spirit of promise and prophecy in the Sacred Record, not an aspiration has been, or will be, in vain ! The prophets of old, far from indifferent to the signification of what they spake beforehand, inquired and searched diligently ;—and it would be well if Christians would now begin to study and observe the analogy between the " Spirit of Prophecy" under the former economy and the " Spirit of Supplication" under the present ; for He, and He alone, is distinctly the moving cause of the last as much as he was of the first. Before the " coming of the Lord" there was a long and connected series of prophecies remained to be *fulfilled*, and before the " knowledge of the Lord" shall cover the earth as the waters do the sea, there must, it now seems, be as rich a body of supplications to be *answered*. There has been, unquestionably, much of active exertion in our day ; but let all who talk of " public usefulness" pause and consider, for upon this principle some of our forefathers may still be far ahead of us, and we in the end may find that we have held but a very inferior place in the series of the Divine procedure. There is such a thing as *presumption* in the ways of men—perhaps the highest in existence, is exertion without earnest prayer. If, then, the spirit of supplication in us comes instead of the spirit of prophecy in former ages, for Christians pray acceptably only through the indwelling power and guidance of the Spirit ; let us implore this Spirit. They need not indulge in dreams about miraculous agency—but fervent prayer has not been shifted from the precise place which it occupied in the Divine economy in ancient times—that is, it must still *precede* the season of God's gracious interference, James v. 16-18. It must still *precede* the fulfilment of the richest promises made and confirmed to the Redeemer himself, on the ground of his own dignity and worth, his death and merits.

do, it would be impious to imagine that we shall look in vain. Men of *his* sending are essential, and in such circumstances, we have no reason to presume upon them, but in the way prescribed. Many who may never be able to acquire the Irish language could, by their supplications, assist here. This harvest is not past—it is not over and gone. In Ireland some may say it is yet to be gathered; there, too, the harvest is great, and there, as it regards the Irish tongue, the labourers are emphatically few.

The path, however, is plain. To be admitted, or rather to be invited into the presence of the Lord, is at all seasons an honour—to be permitted to address him concerning his own cause is greater still. Oh! were the faithful in this kingdom but alive to the importance, and the *necessity*, and the glorious consequences of earnest supplication here, what seasons of prosperity might we not witness? Such intercessors, indeed, have been laughed to scorn, and may be now; yet amidst all those happy days which have passed over other parts of this favoured country, who can tell how much may have been owing to individual, genuine, unostentatious Christians improving their personal interest at the foot of the throne, on behalf of the general good?—Psalm xliv. 4.

If, then, in conclusion, all that has been proposed throughout these pages might be effected through the medium of the colloquial dialect, the Irish language, why should it not be employed for such invaluable purposes, and employed without any delay? The commission of the Mediator, which has been sounding in our ear so long in vain, may now well be heard; for neglect of duty must be attended with consequences altogether as dreadful as any which can result from active misbehaviour. To omit, said Johnson about seventy years ago, “To omit for a year, or for a day, the *most efficacious* method of advancing Christianity, in compliance with any purposes that terminate on this side of the grave, is a crime of which I know not that the world has yet had an example, except in the practice of the planters in America,—a race of mortals whom, I suppose, no other man wishes to resemble.”

But I add nothing more : perhaps the set time is already come when this long-neglected tongue will be employed, not merely as a medium of intercourse between man and man respecting the trifles of a day, but for all those invaluable ends to which, in common with every other form of human speech, it has been all along destined by the great Author of Nature,—and the time also when these ends will be gained, not merely in a distant or obscure corner, here and there, but in some degree commensurate with the necessities of the country.

THE END.

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